

# On the mystery of Katie King

Collected research literature for detectives.

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To William Crookes, my guru in the subject

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# Preface

In this book I have collected resources for those who are interested in studying the materialisations of the spirit Katie King through the medium Florence Cook in the later part of the nineteenth century. I have studied the material, and come to the conclusion that a miracle has happened here, that William Crookes has proved the supernatural.

The book was originally a blog, and contains many links that cannot be put into the book. Google instead of clicking on links, if you can.

Don't bother with the words aimed for clicking at, like "here":s and "this text":s that witness about the fact that this book has been a blog full of links. It has been difficult to purify the book from those things.

Lars Larsen, 19.2.202

## Short introduction to spiritualism in Encyclopedia Britannica

(from the webpage <https://www.britannica.com/topic/spiritualism-religion>)

WRITTEN BY: [J. Gordon Melton](#)

**Spiritualism**, in [religion](#), a movement based on the belief that departed souls can interact with the living. Spiritualists sought to make contact with the dead, usually through the assistance of a [medium](#), a person believed to have the ability to contact [spirits](#) directly. Some mediums worked while in a trancelike state, and some claimed to be the [catalyst](#) for various paranormal physical phenomena (including the materializing or moving of objects) through which the spirits announced their presence.

### History

Various forms of communicating with discarnate spirits of the recently deceased have been observed in [communities](#) around the world, but the purpose of such communication and the understanding of the nature of spirit existence varies considerably. Modern spiritualists point to the ancient accounts of spirit contact in the Bible: the visit of [Saul](#), the king of Israel, to

the so-called [witch of Endor](#), in the course of which the late prophet [Samuel](#) appeared (I Samuel 28), and the story of the Transfiguration, in which [Moses](#) and [Elijah](#) appeared to three of [Jesus](#)' Apostles (Matthew 17, Mark 9). Some phenomena associated with mediums were found among those regarded in the Middle Ages as possessed by devils—e.g., [levitation](#) and speaking in languages unknown to the speaker. Similar phenomena were reported in the witch trials of the early modern period, particularly the appearance of spirits in quasi-material form and the obtaining of knowledge through spirits.

Modern spiritualism traces its beginnings to a series of apparently supernatural events at a farmhouse in Hydesville, N.Y., in 1848. The owner and his family, as well as the previous occupants of the house, had been disturbed by unexplained raps at night. After a severe disturbance, the owner's youngest daughter, [Kate Fox](#), was said to have successfully challenged the supposed spirit to repeat in raps the number of times she flipped her fingers. Once communication had apparently been established, a code was agreed upon by which the raps given could answer questions, and the spirit was said to have identified himself as a man who had been murdered in the house.

The practice of having sittings for communication with spirits spread rapidly from that time, and in the 1860s it was particularly popular in England and France. Kate Fox (afterward Mrs. Fox-Jencken) and one of her sisters, Maggie Fox, devoted much of their later lives to acting as mediums in the United States and England. Many other mediums gave similar sittings, and the attempt to communicate with spirits by table turning (in which participants place their hands on a table and wait for it to vibrate or rotate) became a popular pastime in Victorian drawing rooms.

The unconventional new movement naturally provoked opposition. There were not only verbal condemnations but occasional mob violence. Church leaders associated spiritualism with [witchcraft](#). Some churches regarded the practices of the spiritualists as part of the forbidden activity of [necromancy](#) (communication with the dead in order to learn the future). A decree of the Holy Office of the [Roman Catholic](#) Church in 1898 condemned spiritualistic practices, though it approved of [legitimate](#) scientific investigation of related phenomena. Both Protestant and Catholic bodies released a steady stream of anti-spiritualist literature. Although inherently religious,



during its first generation the movement avoided organizing as a church. Spiritualist associations began to appear in some areas of the United States in the first decades after the [Civil War](#) and finally formed a nationwide organization, the National Spiritualist Association (later the National Spiritualist Association of Churches), in 1893.

Spiritualism also inspired the rise of the [discipline](#) of psychic research to examine the claims made by mediums and their supporters. A variety of techniques were developed to study not only basic psychic experiences ([telepathy](#), [clairvoyance](#), and [precognition](#)) but the more complex phenomenon of spirit contact. By the end of the 19th century, significant efforts were being made to verify the phenomena of mediumship, especially the occasional materialization of spirit entities. Many who participated in psychic research hoped for positive results and occasionally concluded that they had proved the existence of clairvoyance or established the reality of spirit contact. Among the most prominent supporters of spiritualist claims was the chemist Sir [William Crookes](#) (1832–1919), a president of the [Royal Society](#) (the national scientific organization of Great Britain), who investigated and pronounced genuine the materialization phenomena produced by medium Florence Cook.

Those who placed their hopes in physical phenomena, however, were destined for disappointment. One by one, the mediums were discovered to be engaged in fraud, sometimes employing the techniques of stage magicians in their attempts to convince people of their clairvoyant powers. Professional magicians such as [Harry Houdini](#) joined efforts to expose the fraudulent practices of mediums, and in the 20th century the magicians Milbourne Christopher and James Randi became known as much for their efforts to debunk fake mediumship as for their stage work. The exposure of widespread fraud within the spiritualist movement severely damaged its reputation and pushed it to the fringes of society in the United States.



Harry Houdini.*Pictorial Parade*

Spiritualism fared better in Britain, especially in the 1950s after the repeal of the witchcraft laws, which had been used against mediums quite apart from any charges of fakery. It had its greatest success in France and Brazil, where it was known as spiritism and incorporated the idea of [reincarnation](#). So successful has the movement been in Brazil that the French founder of spiritism, Allan Kardec, has been pictured on Brazilian stamps.

The practice of mediumship enjoyed a rebirth in the 1970s as a significant activity within the [New Age movement](#), which looked to the coming of an idealistic [culture](#) in the 21st century. New Age “channelers” claimed to contact a variety of disembodied entities, from Ascended Masters (spiritual beings who are believed to guide human destiny) to extraterrestrials and,

like the spiritualists, the dead. While the New Age movement disappeared in the 1990s, channeling continued to enjoy a large appeal.

## Belief And Practice

Spiritualist belief developed during the early decades of the movement. A core belief of spiritualism is that individuals survive the deaths of their bodies by ascending into a spirit existence. A person's condition after death is directly related to the [moral](#) quality of his human existence. Communication with the spiritual world is both possible and desirable, and spiritual healing is the natural result of such communication. The spiritualists understand God as [infinite](#) intelligence.

Historically, spiritualism was organized in small groups that conducted [séances](#), or meetings for spirit communication. Larger gatherings were held for public demonstrations of spirit contact and psychic phenomena. These gatherings evolved into the Sunday church services that became common in spiritualist churches in the 20th century. Many associations also sponsored camps where believers could congregate in a leisurely atmosphere, have private sessions with mediums, and attend daily séances.

Initially, spiritualist gatherings were concerned with demonstrating and investigating mental phenomena such as [clairvoyance](#), telepathy, and the reception of messages from spirits. The messages that mediums claimed to receive were examined in order to build theoretical constructs for explaining how spirit contact could occur. Very early in the movement, however, séances featuring more spectacular physical phenomena were conducted, and mediums arose who specialized in such displays. Spirits were said to have the power to levitate objects, to speak independently of the [medium](#), to leave pictures on photographic plates, and to materialize objects, including themselves.

Also basic to spiritualist practice is "spirit healing." Among the [precursors](#) of spiritualism was the Magnetist movement, which had grown out of the magnetic healing theories of [Franz Anton Mesmer](#). The Magnetists had specialized in spiritual healing and the public demonstration of magnetic

phenomena (which included hypnotism). Spiritualism absorbed many of the assumptions of the Magnetist movement but maintained that healings were the result of spirit influence rather than magnetic power.

Although spiritualist practices have been motivated by mere curiosity and fascination with the supernatural, they have also been driven by more serious concerns about the fate of the human soul. For those who have lost their faith in traditional [Christianity](#), spiritualists have offered a new [religion](#) based not on an ancient tradition but on facts that apparently can be observed by anyone. Those for whom materialistic ways of thinking have precluded belief in a life after death have been given a new hope of immortality. Those suffering from grief after the death of loved ones have been offered the possibility of communicating with them. The strong involvement of emotion in both the acceptance and the rejection of spiritualism has made it difficult to appraise impartially the evidence for and against it.

[J. Gordon Melton](#)

\* \* \*

([svensk artikel om spiritismen \(det gamla ordet för spiritualismen\)](#) på [Wikipedia](#): <https://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spiritism>)

# Spiritualistisk kyrkohistoria: Mysteriet Katie King. Är detta det slutgiltiga beviset för "himlens" och "andevärldens" realitet?

(jag har samlat forskningslitteratur om Katie King på [denna blogg](#). Alla litteraturhänvisningar och citat nedan står att finna på denna blogg. Jag har försökt vara mycket noga med de källor vi har, citerande alla och hänvisande till citatens källor alltid när jag kan, helst helt tillbaka till gamla originalskrifter på Internet Archive)

Är detta ett av de klaraste och mest övertygande gudsbevisen eller bevisen för "himlens" eller "andevärldens" realitet vi har fått i det moderna väst?:

Den kände kemisten, fysikern och parapsykologen [William Crookes](#)' välkända undersökningar av det fysiska mediet [Florence Cooks](#) (bara 15 år gammal vid starten av undersökningarna!) seanser, där hon sägs ha producerat en ande "i kött och blod", fullt materiellt verklig (jag tror vi får besök av sådana ibland, jag har flera andra exempel på det (1)) vid namn [Katie King](#), som Crookes omfamnade för att känna om hon var verklig, med gott resultat. För att verkligen få veta vad som skedde, skall man inte kolla på wikipediaartiklarna om F. Cook och K. King (wikipedia är alltid notoriskt och systematiskt skeptiska mot sånt här), men låta Crookes själv ärligt och intimt berätta vad han upplevde. Det gör han bäst i två brev (läs det första [här](#) och det andra [här](#)) till en spiritualistisk tidskrift, som förekommer i hans bok "*Researches into the phenomena of Spiritualism*" från 1874. Boken kan läsas gratis på Internet Archive, [här](#). Det citerade avsnittet är från 102-107 i boken. Kapitlet som följer på de två breven, "The last of Katie King" på s. 108, är också intressant, det kan läsas [här](#). I det kapitlet beskriver Crookes hur han lyckades fotografera Katie King med goda resultat. I [wikipediaartikeln om Katie King](#) kan man se en av dessa fotografier, det finns flera att se [här](#).

Crookes undersökningar är från [spiritualismens](#) och [parapsykologins](#) glansdagar, då dessa ännu höll sig ganska seriösa, utan för mycket New Age-flum, utan istället hade en uppsjö av vetenskapsmän involverade i mer eller mindre vetenskapliga tester av medierna.

Så vad säger skeptikerna, ty sådana finns det många av, som har avfärdat det hela som en bluff? De har vanligen två alternativa förklaringar av fenomenet. Det första är att Katie King i själva verket var Florence Cook själv, som klädde ut sig, som lämnade seansstolen och vandrade omkring på andra sidan draperiet. Men läser man primärvittnenas vittnesbörd, varav huvudsakligen tolv av de som bevitnade seanserna har publicerat sig om detta (som jag vet om efter efterforskningar):

Sir William Crookes, den välkände författarinnan Florence Marryat ([här](#), [här](#) och [här](#)), W.H. Harrison, redaktör för tidskriften "The Spiritualist", vars vittnesbörd är återgett i [denna text](#) av Epes Sargent (s.104), och i [denna text](#) (s.50) av samma förf., sedan fler vittnen: Mr. Thomas Blyton, "Secretary of the Dalston Association of Enquirers Into Spiritualism", vars vittnesbörd är återgett i [denna text](#) (s.52) av Epes Sargent, den franske poeten, filosofen och dramatikern Eugene Nus (i en fransk bok, utdraget finns översatt [här](#)), J.C.Luxmoore (2), J.M.Gully (3), Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein (4), Dr. George Sexton (5), Henry Dunphy (6), Mr. George Henry Tapp (7) och Mr. Benjamin Coleman (8).

När man går igenom dessa skriftliga vittnesmål ser man att stor möda har lagts ner på att motbevisa denna skeptikertes ovan, ja så stor möda att man baxnar. Läs t.ex. de tester med hjälp av elektriska anordningar som man gjorde på en seans, beskriven [här](#). Alla tester bekräftade fenomenets äkthet. Men det som väger mest för mig, är de talrika vittnesbörden på att man sett Katie King och Florence Cook tillsammans, båda sedda på samma gång. Se bevis på detta särskilt i William Crookes' två korta brev som anförts ovan. Det sägs om Crookes: "*..he further testified to Miss Cook's perfect honesty, truthfulness, and willingness to submit to the severest tests that he could approve of.*" (från boken "[The proof palpable of immortality](#)", kap.8, s.100, av Epes Sargent)

Vad är den andra förklaringen skeptikerna kommer med? Jo, att Florence Cook skulle ha haft en medbrottsling, en medhjälpare, som hon smugglat in i seansrummet och som spelade Katie King. Denna tes lades det ingen möda på att motbevisa från William Crookes sida, eftersom den tydligen var och är så uppenbart absurd. Det talas lite om den i litteraturen. Varför? Jo, det absurda ligger i tron att William Crookes och hans medhjälpare inte skulle ha gjort de mest basala och grundläggande

granskningarna som krävdes för att röja undan misstankar om bedrägeri, dvs. att försäkra sig om att ingen annan än de inbjudna kom in i seanslokalen. Jag menar, alla upptänkliga tester gjordes (ja, återigen en gång säger Epes Sargent i sistnämnda text, för att vara tydlig: "*Every test he (Crookes) proposed she (Florence) readily submitted to.*", s. 109, [här](#)), så varför tror man att Sir William Crookes, en av världens mest kända och seriösa vetenskapsmän på sin tid, inte ens granskade seanslokalen och försäkrade sig om att ingen oinbjuden kom in i den? Jag menar, om han och hans medhjälpare, en elektriker, gjorde tester med hjälp av elektriska anordningar? Det är så absurt, att något sådant vore mer mirakulöst än själva miraklet som ligger i Katie Kings äkthet (det finns nämligen goda skäl att tro att "himlen" och "andevärlden" finns). Jag menar, de höll på med tester i tre långa år, fyrtio långa seanser sammanlagt, och stundom var Florence Cook hela veckor på besök hos Crookes' familj, i sträck, särskilt under de sex senaste månaderna av den tid seanserna pågick. Crookes skriver i [detta kapitel](#) i sin bok "Researches in the phenomena of Spiritualism" (1874) följande:

*"Indeed, I do not believe she could carry on a deception if she were to try, and if she did she would certainly be found out very quickly, for such a line of action is altogether foreign to her nature. And to imagine that an innocent school-girl of fifteen should be able to conceive and then successfully carry out for three years so gigantic an imposture as this, and in that time should submit to any test which might be imposed upon her, should bear the strictest scrutiny, should be willing to be searched at any time, either before or after a seance, and should meet with even better success in my own house than at that of her parents, knowing that she visited me with the express object of submitting to strict scientific tests, — to imagine, I say, the Katie King of the last three years to be the result of imposture does more violence to one's reason and common sense than to believe her to be what she herself affirms."*

Och vad var Crookes' forskningsvillkor? Faktum är att det var han som var chefen, inte Florence Cook, och han var närmast besatt av att ta reda på om fenomenet var äkta, och besatt av att göra testerna vetenskapligt trovärdiga. Han säger på ett ställe om testerna: "*It must be at my own house, and my own selection of friends and spectators, under my own conditions, and I may do whatever I like as regards apparatus.*" (ur Arthur Conan Doyles bok "[The history of Spiritualism](#)" 1926: volym 1, s.180). Det

samma framkommer också i det längre citatet nyss ovan. William Crookes fick faktiskt lov att undersöka rummet, så att ingen kunde gömma sig i något draperi eller under soffan eller sängen, och att anta att han inte gjorde sådana ting, är så absurt att Crookes inte har funnit det mödan värt att försvara sig mot sådana anklagelser (9), under en hel livstid efter Cooks seanser, trots att han höll fast vid sin tro på Katie Kings äkthet ända till sin död 1919, nästan femtio år senare.

Det ända realistiska stället jag kan komma på var man skulle kunna gömma sig i en sådan seanslokal, under sådana omständigheter som rådde i Crookes seanslokal, är att vika in sig i ett draperi (det tar för lång tid och bullrar för mycket att krypa under soffa eller säng, Crookes skriver att Katie King försvann vanligen omedelbart när han kom in i seanskabinettet). **Men det är ju det första stället man undersöker!**. Mr. Luxmore, en seansdeltagare, skriver om en seans med Cook och Katie King i sitt eget hem (eller var det hos William Crookes, jag är inte helt säker): *"I carefully examined every part of the cabinet while Miss Cook was being searched by Mrs. and Miss Corner. Nothing could possibly have been concealed there without my discovering it* (från boken "[The proof palpable of immortality](#)", kap.8, s. 99, av Epes Sargent). Om Katie Kings vita dräkt skriver Epes Sargent: *"Whence came this white drapery? As we proceed in our narrative, it will be seen that Mr. Crookes satisfied himself thoroughly that it could not have been brought into his house and used by the Medium.* (från boken "[The proof palpable of immortality](#)", kap.8, s. 102) "

Så, vad hade måstat hända om Cook hade en medbrottsling? Jo, hon måste då ha lyckats gömma sig i Crookes hus en hel vecka ibland (ty Cook var stundom i en hel vecka på besök hos Crookes, under det att seanser hölls), troligen utan mat och utan dryck, och faktum är att det är närmast livsfarligt att vara en vecka helt utan att dricka (ok, jag medger att hon kan ha släpat med sig en massa mat och dryck i en ryggsäck. Men sju dagar i total isolering är mycket tungt ändå. Och ryggsäcken gör det ännu lättare att upptäcka medbrottslingen). Inte bara det, utan medbrottslingen måste också ha kunnat smita obemärkt in och ut ur huset (antagligen en villa), ja inte bara det, utan kunnat **smita obemärkt in och ut ur seansrummet**. Och detta **i hela fyrtio seanser hos Crookes utspridda över tre långa år!** Gimme a break. William Crookes skriver i artikeln "[The last of Katie King](#)" följande:



*"I prepare and arrange my library myself as the dark cabinet, and usually, after Miss Cook has been dining and conversing with us, and scarcely out of our sight for a minute, she walks direct into the cabinet, and I, at her request, lock its second door, and keep possession of the key all through the seance;"*

Det borde "settle the argument", avgöra frågan, en gång för alla.

Vad mer måste till? Jo, eftersom Katie King stundom liknade mycket på Florence Cook (det förklaras av att apparitionen tog sin kraft från mediet, som alltid låg i trance medan Katie King framträdde. Men det sades också att ibland liknade inte Katie King alls på Florence ["they were totally different"], vem var hon då om det var ett bedrag?), måste medbrottsligen ha varit ingen annan än Florences egen syster! Hon hade två sådana, och båda var kända medier. Men Crookes' familj och F. Cooks familj kände varann väl! Faktum är att de första seanserna med F. Cook där Katie King uppenbarade sig, **hölls i Florence Cooks eget föräldrahem!** Med föräldrarna närvarande som vittnen på seansen! Och Florences föräldrar och familj var med på en del (många?) seanser med Florence och Katie King i William Crookes' hem! Tror ni verkligen att det inte hade avslöjats om Katie King hade varit Florences syster, under dessa seanser? Att anta något sånt är absurt. Dessutom var det här aldrig någon fråga bland skeptikerna. Aldrig något som William Crookes behövde bevisa. Han gjorde bara tester utifrån det som skeptikerna anklagade honom och Cook för. Självklart hade skeptikerna anklagat Florence för att uppvisa sin syster som Katie King om detta hade varit bara en avlägsen möjlighet.

Men det som avgör hela saken en gång för alla, är de primärvittnen från dessa seanser, som bevittnat s.k. "övernaturliga" ting med Katie King. William Crookes tyckte hon var alldeles underbar, närmast som en ängel, med en väldig charm och ljuvlighet, och skriver således om detta i artikeln "[The last of Katie King](#)":

*"But photography is as inadequate to depict the perfect beauty of Katie's face, as words are powerless to describe her charms of manner. Photography may, indeed, give a map of her countenance; but how can it reproduce the brilliant purity of her complexion, or the ever-varying expression*

*of her most mobile features, now overshadowed with sadness when relating some of the bitter experiences of her past life, now smiling with all the innocence of happy girlhood when she had collected my children round her, and was amusing them by recounting anecdotes of her adventures in India?*

*" Round her she made an atmosphere of life;  
The very air seemed lighter from her eyes,  
They were so soft and beautiful, and rife  
With all we can imagine of the skies;  
Her overpowering presence make you feel  
It would not be be idolatry to kneel. ""*

(dikten är från "Don Juan" av den engelske romantiske poeten Lord Byron.  
Min anm.)

Jag skall nu anföra några flera vittnesmål om Katie Kings överjordiska skönhet, från flera vittnen:

Epes Sargent skriver: *"The exceeding whiteness of the drapery with which Katie came clothed was always noticeable; reminding the Scriptural reader of that passage in Mark: "His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them."* (från boken "[The proof palpable of immortality](#)", kap.8, s. 102)

Exceeding betyder "övermåttan" på svenska. Hennes skrud hade alltså en övermåttan vithet. Ja, Katie King var helt enkelt som en ängel utan vingar.

Prins Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein, skrev att Katie i verkligheten var *"a thousand times more lovely than her photograph"* (se [denna text](#), s.59). Och vidare: *"I had before me a young lady of an ideal beauty, supple, elegant, and clad in most graceful drapery, with chestnut locks visible through her white veil. Her robe, trailing like that of an antique statue, entirely covered her naked feet. Her arms, of surpassing beauty, delicate, white, were visible to the shoulders. Their attachment to the body was finely statuesque ; and the hands, a little large, had long, tapering fingers, rosy to the ends."* Och vidare längre fram: *"And, to conclude, there was in this apparition the grace of a Psyche descended from her pedestal."*

J.M.Guppy vittnar också hänförd: "...whilst over her head and face a beautifully transparent veil fell, giving to the whole figure an appearance of grace and purity which is not easily conveyed by words." (i [denna text](#), s.62 )

Florence Cook beskrev Katie Kings ansiktes utseende under en seans "as looking white and deathlike, while her eyes were fixed and staring, as if made of glass" (från [denna text](#) av Epes Sargent, s. 50).

Det står vidare i denna text att "Miss Cook, who as yet had not been entranced by the spirit, said that the spirit's (Katie's) head and shoulders were materialized; but below, her form melted into thin air. Katie would be sometimes high up and sometimes low down, so that the bust nearly touched the floor, in which position she looked "most unearthly." It sometimes appeared as if a head were "wandering about with no legs or body, visible or invisible." (från [denna text](#) av Epes Sargent, s. 51)

Samma text på s. 50 har ett vittnesmål om att Katie King själv "knew she looked most unearthly".

Bl.a. Florence Marryat (ett av allt att döma trovärdigt vittne) fick bevittna **hur Katie King dematerialiserades**, mirakulöst, det är beskrivet av henne [här](#), i Arthur Conan Doyles bok "[A history of Spiritualism](#)", Vol.1, från 1926.

Eugene Nus, bl.a. (Florence Marryat beskriver också något liknande), fick bevittna hur Katie King klippte tygbitar ur sin dräkt och gav åt seancedeltagarna, och hur hon sedan lappade hålen genom att klappa på tyget. Tyget blev helt återställt av klappningarna. Så gör bara "andar". Nus beskriver det i [detta citat](#) ut en av hans böcker.

William Crookes skriver också i brevet "[Spirit Forms](#)" om hans son, som också skulle kunna räknas som primärvittne (då har vi minst fyra primärvittnen med vittnesmål, nämnda i skrift (10), dock har inte den fjärde skrivit något själv som jag kan hitta, hans vittnesmål återberättas av William Crookes):

*"My eldest son, a lad of fourteen, who was sitting opposite me, in such a position that he could see behind the curtain, tells me he distinctly saw the phosphorus lamp apparently floating about in space over Miss Cook, illuminating her as she lay motionless on the sofa, but he could not see anyone holding the lamp."*

Och till sist har vi det överväldigande beviset från händelsen då Katie King skulle ta farväl av alla seansdeltagarna och från Florence Cook, för att aldrig mera komma tillbaka till den fysiska världen, något som fick Florence Cook att gråta (11) ([denna artikel](#) skriver om det mot slutet). Man får en känsla av att detta inte är teater (Florence var inte tränad i skådespeleri), något det hade varit om Katie King hade varit en medbrottsling.

Vad blir min konklusion? Jo, att vi har så mycket forskningsmaterial (bl.a. sjutton primärvittnen i skrift, varav femton skrivit ner sitt vittnesbörd själv!) kring dessa seancer med Cook, att om någonsin "andevärlden" visade sig klart och tydligt i modern tid i Europa, så var det här. Men till syvende och sist står och faller det med vittnenas trovärdighet, ty vi har bara deras texter att tillgå, inga laboratorieexperiment som vi kan återupprepa. Och jag får ett intryck av Crookes' intellektuella hederlighet av allt jag läser. Och likaså är Florence Marryat, Eugene Nus och flera av de andra intellektuella, kända personer, som man har svårt att tro att de ljuger medvetet i sina skrifter, det skulle inte ha tjänat dem. Allt detta, plus att det hela blir absurt om vi skall föreställa oss hur det antagna bedrägeriet gick till, signalerar åt mig att **här har en Uppenbarelse skett**.

Vi har ett känt materialisationsmedium idag också, den nulevande [David Thompson](#), som mediet Camilla Elfving (f.d. Camilla Persson) har skrivit om i boken "Den slutna kretsen. En sann berättelse om fysiskt mediumskap och liv efter döden" (2009). Om han är äkta (han har inte blivit fast för bedrägeri ännu), kan det bekräfta Florence Cooks äkthet. [Helen Duncan](#) (1897-1956) är ett annat tidigare känt materialisationsmedium med trovärdighet. Att änglar i kött och blod när allt kommer omkring verkat ha visat sig på jorden, är också ett indicium på att Cooks materialisation kan vara äkta, om dessa andra besök verkligen har skett, vilket man kan försöka bedöma (se mitt gudsbevis nr. 20 i (1) nedan).

Hade Napoleon eller drottning Victoria visat sig genom Florence Cook, i kött och blod, hade jag varit mer skeptisk än jag är till att en fullkomligt okänd brittisk kvinna från 1600-talet visar sig på en brittisk seans. Katie King sade dock att hennes far var en relativt känd pirat, Sir [Henry Morgan](#), och att hennes rätta namn från jordelivet var Annie Owens Morgan. Hennes far Henry Morgan hade visat sig på andra seanser på 1800-talet i form av "John King". Katies uppgifter om sitt liv på jorden, av vilka vissa finns [här](#) (s.63), verkar realistiska.

Det "avslöjande" av Cook som den skeptiska litteraturen har påstått tog plats, har blivit utförligt diskuterat och utförligt vederlagt i den litteratur jag har på min Katie King-blogg, t.ex. i [denna artikel](#) (slutet) och [denna text](#) (slutet) av Florence Marryat.

Det är också värt att nämna att Katie Kings apparition, under de första seanserna där hon framträdde, började mycket fumligt, dåliga apparitioner av ibland bara enstaka kroppsdelar (ja, först bara en mask!), men att hennes apparition med tiden blev alltmera hel och full och vacker. Det talar också sitt tydliga språk. Det finns en hel historia här. Bedrägerier börjar inte så. Vittnesbörd om denna successiva historia finns bl.a. hos läkaren J.M.Gully (se [denna text](#) på s. 54).

Är fenomenet äkta, bestyrker det också min tes som jag framfört tidigare på mina bloggar, att "andevärlden" är materiellt fullt verklig (ingen okroppslig svävande existens), om ock en "andemateriell" verklighet. Det hela motsäger inte heller min tes att "andevärlden" finns och opererar med basen i mikrolivet, som vår makrovärlds mikro-motpol. Katie King bestod av atomer, himmelska atomer, men hur, är en stor gåta. De tygstycken som hon klippte ur sin dräkt för att ge till seansdeltagarna, upplöstes också efter en tid. Hennes hår, som hon också klippte stycken av och gav till seansdeltagare, sägs dock ha funnits kvar. Hennes hår återställdes genast efter att hon klippte bitar av det för att ge bort.

(1) Se mitt gudsbevis nr. 20, om de änglar i kött och blod som Hjalmar Ekström och Sadhu Sundar Singh såg, i min lista över gudsbevis [här](#).

(2) En beskrivning av några seanser hos Crookes i början av 1873, av Mr. J.C.Luxmoore, finns i tidskriften "The London Spiritualist" 15 maj 1873

(3) Dr. J. M. Gully, "formerly of Great Malvern, England, a thoroughly experienced physician and a careful investigator", skriver i [denna text](#), på s. 54, och i [denna text](#) på s. 62-63 till Epes Sargent 20 juli 1874

(4) I [denna text](#), s. 59-60

(5) I [denna text](#), s. 60-61. George Sexton var 1875 och 1876 redaktör för den spiritualistiske tidskriften "The Spiritual Magazine", och det står om honom på [denna sida](#) att han var "a free thinker and atheist, who was converted to spiritualism and then abandoned it "because of its anti-Christian character"

(6) I [denna text](#), s. 64-65. Dunphy, "a barrister and writer" och "a wellknown man of letters" från "The Morning Post", sägs ha bevitnat när Katie King dematerialiserades inför publiken när den ökända scenen med seansdeltagaren Mr. Volkmann tog plats i december 1873, då Volkmann tog tag i Katie King för att se om Florence Cook lurades, vilket ledde till en strid där två andra hindrade Volkmann med våld, och denne förlorade en del av sitt skägg i kampen. Uppgiften om detta finns i mellersta texten på [denna sida](#). Sådär skriver man på nämnda sida:

*"In December 1873, Volckmann (who later married the medium, Mrs Guppy, who was extremely jealous of Florence's success), was present at a seance and attempted to seize Katie King. Two other sitters took hold of him (in the course of which, he lost part of his beard) and prevented any serious damage occurring. Dunphy, a barrister and writer, witnessed the event and said that Katie partly dematerialized during the escapade. On examining Florence, she was still secure with tape and a seal, as at the beginning of the seance."*

(7) I [denna text](#), s. 65-66, George Henry Tapp var medlem i "The Dalston Association of Inquirers".

(8) I [denna text](#), s. 56-58. Coleman har kallats "The Father of English Spiritualists", och har skrivit verket "[Spiritualism in America](#)" 1861.

(9) Crookes skriver om en typisk seans: "*The seance was held at the house of Mr. Luxmore, and the "cabinet" was a back drawing room, separated from the front room in which the company sat by a curtain. The usual formality of searching the room and examining the fastenings having been gone through, Miss Cook entered the cabinet.*" (i brevet "[Florence Cooks mediumship](#)")

(10) Egentligen har jag hittills hittat femton primärvittnen, nämnda i skrift, dock är tre i andrahand, Crookes' son och de två sista jag nämner här har inte skrivit något själv:

Vittne nr. 14: Mediet själv, Florence Cook, bevittnade också materialisationen många gånger, och hennes vittnesmål är anført i skrift på flera ställen, t.ex. i [denna text](#).

Vittne nr. 15: det berättas om en Aksakoff, en rysk aristokrat, som bevittnade följande sak i Florence Cooks seanser: "*An example of the many testimonies given concerning Florence Cook's mediumship is that of Aksakoff, a Russian aristocrat; he reported how, when attending a seance, the Medium was bound 'with twined tape and sealed knots', and her hands were brought behind her back and these were also bound. Then, a lengthy piece of tape was fixed to her that was brought outside from where she was sitting: this would indicate any movement by her. After a short period, and light from a lamp being present, they saw 'a human figure standing upright... it was completely clad in white...That was Katie...All the time the sitting lasted Katie chattered away with the sitters'. Katie asked whether there were any questions and Aksakoff asked to see Florence; Katie invited him to where Florence sat and on not being able to see her adequately was told by Katie to use the lamp. He did so and there was Florence, 'in a deep trance... sitting on a chair, with both her hands bound fast behind her back'" (från mellersta texten på [denna sida](#))*

(11) "*She (Katie King, min anm.) then appeared tired, and said reluctantly that she must go, as the power was failing, and bade farewell in the most affectionate way. The sitters all wished her God speed, and thanked her for the wonderful manifestations she had given. Looking once more earnestly at her friends she let the curtain fall and she was seen no more. She was heard to wake up the Medium, who tearfully entreated her to stay a little*

*longer, but Katie said, 'My dear, I can't. My work is done. God bless you,' and we heard the sound of her parting kiss. The Medium then came out among us, looking much exhausted and deeply troubled."* (från boken "[The proof palpable of immortality](#)", kap.8, s. 105, av Epes Sargent)

P.S.: Epes Sargent (1813-1880), redaktör, poet och dramatiker, är en viktig (och kanske den mest omfattande) källa i dessa texter om Katie King. Är han tillförlitlig? Han var en respekterad intellektuell på sin tid, och den franska wikipediaartikeln om honom kan läsas [här](#). Hans bok om andematerialisationer, "[The proof palpable of immortality](#)" publicerades bara ett år efter att seanserna med Katie King och Florence Cook tog slut i maj 1874. Det att hans bok kom ut så snart efter, i 1875, bådär gott för dess trovärdighet, händelserna var ännu i färskt minne och vittnen fanns det gott om med starka, färska minnen. Alla citat av Sargent i min artikel kommer från denna samma bok.



## Testimony about Katie King in Epes Sargent's book "The proof palpable of immortality", del 2

Testimony about Katie King in Epes Sargent's book ["The proof palpable of immortality, being an account of the materialization phenomena of modern spiritualism"](#), published for the first time 1875, p. 94-110:

### **"The Development of Florence Cook and Katie King**

From these abstruse though not irrelevant considerations, the course of our narrative leads us back to Miss Cook. She had begun to exhibit medial powers as early as 1870. In a letter to Mr. Harrison, dated May, 1872, she writes: "I am sixteen years of age. From my childhood I could see spirits and hear voices, and was addicted to sitting by myself talking to what I declared to be living people. As no one else could see or hear anything, my parents tried to make me believe it was all imagination, but I would not alter my belief, so was looked upon as a very eccentric child. In the spring of 1870 I was invited to the house of a school-friend, whose name I am not at liberty to mention. She asked me if I had ever heard of Spirit rapping, adding that her father, mother and self had sat at a table, and got movements, and that if I liked, they would try that evening."

Miss Cook, though at first somewhat "horrificed" at the idea, got her mother's consent and sat with her friends. She soon found that the raps followed her. A message was given to her from what purported to be the spirit of her aunt; and then, she being left by herself at the table, it rose four feet. Miss Cook continues:

"I went home astonished. Mamma and I went a few days after. We had some excellent tests of Spirit identity given us; still we did not believe in Spirits.\* At last it was spelt out that if we would sit in the dark I should be carried round the room. I laughed, not thinking it would be done, and put out the light. The room was not perfectly dark, a light came in from the window. Soon I felt my chair taken from me. I was lifted up until I touched the ceiling. All in the room could see me. I felt too startled at my novel position to scream, and was carried over the heads of the sitters, and put gently on to a table at the other end of the room. Alanna asked if we could get manifestations at our own home. The table answered, 'Yes,' and that I was

a Medium. The next evening we sat at home; a table and two chairs were smashed, and a great deal of mischief done. We said we could never sit again, but we were not left in peace. Books and other articles were thrown at me, chairs walked about in the light, the table tilted violently at meal-times, and great noises were sometimes made at night. At last we sat again; the table behaved better, and a communication was given to the effect that we were to go to 74, Navarino-road, and that there was an association of Spiritualists there. Out of curiosity mamma and I went, and found we had been told quite correctly. Mr. Thomas Blyton came to a seance at our house; he invited me to a seance at Mr. Wilkes's library, in Dailston-lane. There I met Mr. Harrison. He came to see the manifestations at my home. By this time we were convinced of the truth of spirit communion. About this time I was first entranced; a Spirit spoke through me, telling papa that if I sat with Messrs. Herne and Williams I should get the direct voice. I had several sittings with them, and finally succeeded in getting the direct voice, direct writing, and spirit touches. The presiding spirit of my circles is Katie, John King's daughter."

\* Here is a touch of Nature. similar to that which Shakespeare makes manifest in the character of Hamlet. Just after he has seen and conversed with the spirit of his father, Hamlet talks of "that journey from which no traveler ever returns." Just after Miss Cook has told us that she used to see Spirits and hear voices," she says, "still we did not believe in Spirits." Perhaps, however, all that she here meant was that she did not believe they were active in this particular instance.

Of the subsequent developments, the sittings with Mr. Herne, and the final appearance of Katie in full form, I have already given an account.

Mr. Henry M. Dunphy relates that on one occasion, at a seance, Katie called for pencil and paper, saying she wanted to write a note. He produced a gold pencil-case with a double movement, one for producing the lead, and the other a pen. When handed to Katie, she unscrewed the little cap at the top, so as to scatter the leads on the carpet; she laughed, screwed on the top again, and then wrote the following message on a sheet of note-paper and threw it out: "I am much pleased that you have all come tonight at my invitation. -- Annie Morgan."

On another occasion Mr. Dunphy inquired whether Katie would put on a heavy gold ring which he took off his finger and offered to her. This she

immediately took out of his hand and placed on her own wedding finger, saying naively, "We are now engaged." On his subsequently reaching with his hand to receive the ring, Katie allowed him to touch hers, and afterwards told him to touch her lips, which he did with his hands, and she imprinted on them a kiss.

At another sitting, a passing remark having been made about lawyers, Katie asked whether her hearers knew what the Irish usher said when he was ordered to clear the court. "No," was the reply. "Well, then," said she, "he shouted, 'Now, then, all you blackguards who are not lawyers, leave the court.'"

"Trivial and unspiritual as some of these acts and expressions may seem, I quote them as having a bearing on the question of the intellectual calibre of these materialized Spirits. Miss Emily Kislingbury, who has given considerable study to Miss Cook's mediumship, in a description of a seance at which she was present, Feb. 22d, 1873, remarks: "When Katie herself came and showed a fair-complexioned, large, massive face, and mouth set with brilliantly white teeth, I failed to see in it any resemblance to her Medium; and my mother, who saw Katie for the first time, expressed her surprise that a comparison should ever have been made between them. I have, however, under more strict test conditions, seen in the Spirit face a very striking resemblance to Miss Cook.. "

A slow tune was played with great expression inside the cabinet.... Katie asked me, to my astonishment, to sing the song beginning 'Du bist die Ruh', der Friede mild,' and she would follow me. 'But,' said I, 'Katie, you cannot sing the German words.' 'Oh, can't I?' she said. 'My Medium can't, but I am not so stupid; you try me.' I sang the song through, and the same clear, bell-like voice again followed mine, pronouncing the German perfectly.

"In the spring of 1873 a series of sittings was held for the purpose of getting a photographic likeness of Katie. The photographing was done by Mr. Harrison whose close and intelligent study of this remarkable case of materialization seems to have aided largely in the right development of Miss Cook's extraordinary powers. On the 7th of May a successful sitting was had, and no less than four photographs were taken. It is from one of the best of these that the engraving, which forms the frontispiece of this volume, was copied.

"In the photograph itself," says Mr. Harrison, "the features are more detailed and beautiful, and there is an expression of dignity and ethereality in the face which is not fully represented in the engraving, which, however, has been executed as nearly as possible with scientific accuracy, by an artist of great professional skill."

In a statement signed by Amelia Corner, Caroline Corner, J. C. Luxmoore, G. R. Tapp, and V. H. Harrison, we have a clear and interesting account, which I here slightly abridge, of the process of getting a photograph of Katie by the magnesium light:

"The cabinet doors were placed open, and shawls hung across. The seance commenced at six P. M., and lasted about two hours, with an interval of half an hour. The Medium was entranced almost directly when she was placed in the cabinet, and in a few minutes Katie stepped out into the room. The sitters, in addition to the undersigned, were Mrs. Cook and her two children, whose delight at Katie's familiarity with them was most amusing.

"Katie was dressed in pure white, except that her robe was cut low with short sleeves, allowing her beautiful neck and arms to be seen. Her head dress was occasionally pulled back so as to allow her hair, which was brown, to be visible. Her eyes were large and bright, of a dark blue or gray color. Her countenance was animated and lifelike, her cheeks and lips ruddy and clear. "

Our expressions of pleasure at seeing her thus before us seemed to encourage her to redouble her efforts to give a good seance. By the light of a candle and a small lamp, during the intervals of photography, she stood or moved about, and chatted to us all, keeping up a lively conversation, in which she criticized the sitters, and the literary photographer and his arrangements very freely. By degrees she walked away from the cabinet, and came boldly out into the room.

"Katie usually leaned on the shoulder of Mr. Luxmoore, and stood up to be focussed several times, on one occasion holding the lamp to illuminate her face. Once she looked at the sitters through Mr. Luxmoore's eye-glass. She patted his head, and pulled his hair, and allowed him and Mrs. Corner to pass their hands over her dress, in order that they might satisfy themselves that she wore only one robe.

"As one of the plates was taken out of the room for development, she ran a few feet out of the cabinet after Mr. Harrison, saying she wished to see it; and on his return it was shown to her, he standing close to her and touching her at the time, While he was absent she walked up to the camera and inspected that 'queer machine,' as she called it.

"Just before one of the plates was taken, as Katie was reposing herself outside the cabinet, a long, sturdy, masculine right arm, bare to the shoulder, and moving its fingers, was thrust out of the opening at the top of the cabinet. Katie turned round and upbraided the intruder, saying that it was a shame for another Spirit to interpose while she stood for her likeness, and she bade him 'get out.'

"Toward the close of the seance Katie said that her power was going, and that she was 'really melting away this time.' The power being weak, the admission of light into the cabinet seemed gradually to destroy the lower part of her figure, and she sank down until her neck touched the floor, the rest of her body having apparently vanished, her last words being that we must sing, and sit still for a few minutes, 'for it was a sad thing to have no legs to stand upon.' This was done, and Katie soon came out again, entire as at first, and one more photograph was successfully taken. Katie then shook hands with Mr. Luxmoore, went inside her cabinet, and rapped for us to take the medium out.

"The seance had been given under strict test conditions. The only stipulation Katie made throughout was, that the sitters would not stare fixedly at her whilst she stood for her photograph.

"Before commencing, Mrs. and Miss Corner took the Medium to her bedroom, and, having taken off her clothes and thoroughly searched them, dressed her without a gown, but simply with a cloak of dark gray waterproof cloth over her underclothing, and at once led her to the seance room, where her wrists were tied tightly together with tape. the knots were examined by the sitters respectively, and sealed with a signet ring. She was then seated in the cabinet, which had been previously examined. The tape was passed through a brass bracket in the floor, brought under the shawl, and tied securely to a chair outside the cabinet, so that the slightest movement on the part of the Medium would have been at once detected.

"During the interval of half an hour, Mrs. Corner took charge of the Medium, whilst she was out of the cabinet, and did not lose sight of her for one minute. The tying and sealing were repeated before the second part of the seance, and on each occasion of the Medium leaving the cabinet, the knots and seals and tape were duly examined by all the sitters, and were found intact. the medium was tied and sealed by Mr. Luxmoore, whose signet ring was used." In a separate communication Mr. Luxmoore writes:

"I carefully examined every part of the cabinet while Miss Cook was being searched by Mrs. and Miss Corner. Nothing could possibly have been concealed there without my discovering it. I should also mention, that soon after one of the photographs had been taken, Katie pulled back the curtain, or rather rug, which hangs in front, and requested us to look at her, when she appeared to have lost all her body. She had a most curious appearance; she seemed to be resting on nothing but her neck, her head being close to the floor. Her white robe was under her."

Phenomena like these, as Dr. Wm. Hitchman aptly remarks, present a question "not to be settled at all by leading articles, but by positive experimental testimony." In this case such testimony has been given in abundance.

Previous to Prof. Crookes's taking the case in hand, Dr. Gully, Mr. Blackburn, Mr. Luxmoore, Mr. W. H. Harrison, and many other competent investigators had, at numerous seances, satisfied themselves fully that Katie and Miss Cook were distinct personalities.

"All who attended these seances," says Dr. Gully, "are aware with what anxious care arrangements were always made by which the smallest movements by the Medium within were rendered detectable by the sitters outside, by means of tapes attached to the Medium's body, and extended along the floor, and held by some one present; and, on one or two occasions, by the extension of the Medium's own dark hair, not to mention the precise tying and sealing of the wrists... These tests have abundantly satisfied me that the form which appears is not Miss Cook, but has a totally separate existence."

Notwithstanding these well-founded convictions there was a natural wish among Spiritualists that assurance should be made doubly sure, and in this wish no one joined more readily than Dr. Gully.

To determine the question whether Miss Cook was lying at rest inside the cabinet while Katie in her flowing robes was outside, Mr. C. F. Varley, F. R. S., the electrician of the Atlantic Cable, noted for his skill in testing broken cables, conceived the idea of passing a weak electrical current through the body of the Medium all the time the manifestations were going on. He did this by means of a galvanic battery and cable-testing apparatus, which was so delicate that any movement whatever, on the part of Miss Cook, would be instantly indicated, while it would be impossible for her to dress and play the part of the Spirit without breaking the circuit and being instantly detected.

Yet under these conditions the Spirit-form did appear as usual, exhibited its arms, spoke, wrote, and touched several persons; and this happened, be it remembered, not in the Medium's own house, but in that of Mr. Luxmoore, at the West end of London. For nearly an hour the circuit was never broken, and at the conclusion Miss Cook was found in a trance. Thus it was clearly proved that Miss Cook was not only in the cabinet, but perfectly quiescent, while Katie was visible and moving about outside.

Similar tests were soon repeated by Mr. Crookes in his own house with equally satisfactory results. Early in March he reported: "As far as the experiments go, they prove conclusively that Miss Cook is inside while Katie is outside the cabinet," and he further testified to Miss Cook's perfect honesty, truthfulness, and willingness to submit to the severest tests that he could approve of.

But the crowning proof was yet to come. On the 12th of March, 1874, during a seance at his own house, Katie came to the curtain, and called him to her, saying, "Come into the room and lift my Medium's head up; she has slipped down." Katie was then standing before him, clothed in her usual white robes and turban head-dress. He walked into the library up to Miss Cook, Katie stepping aside to allow him to pass. He found that Miss Cook had slipped partially off the sofa, and that her head was hanging in a very awkward position. He lifted her on to the sofa, and in so doing had satisfactory evidence, in spite of the darkness, that Miss Cook was not attired in the Katie costume, but had on her ordinary black velvet dress, and was in a deep trance.

On the 29th of March, at a seance at Hackney, Katie told Mr. Crookes that she thought she should be able to show herself and Miss Cook together.

Turning the gas out, he entered the room used as a cabinet, bearing a phosphorus lamp. This consisted of a six or eight ounce bottle, containing a little phosphorized oil, and tightly corked.

It being dark, he felt about for Miss Cook. He found her crouching on the floor. Kneeling down, he let air enter the lamp, and by its light saw the young lady, dressed in black velvet, as she had been in the early part of the evening, and to all appearance senseless. She did not move when he took her hand and held the light close to her face, but continued quietly breathing. The remainder of the narrative I give in Mr. Crookes's own words:

"Raising the lamp, I looked around and saw Katie standing close behind Miss Cook. She was robed in flowing white drapery, as we had seen her previously during the seance. Holding one of Miss Cook's hands in mine, and still kneeling, I passed the lamp up and down, so as to illuminate Katie's whole figure, and satisfy myself thoroughly that I was really looking at the veritable Katie, whom I had clasped in my arms a few moments before, and not at the phantasm of a disordered brain. "She did not speak, but moved her head, and smiled in recognition. Three separate times did I carefully examine Miss Cook, crouching before me, to be sure that the hand I held was that of a living woman, and three separate times did I turn the lamp to Katie, and examine her with steadfast scrutiny, until I had no doubt whatever of her objective reality."

Of the points of difference between the two, Mr. Crookes says:

"Katie's height varies; in my house I have seen her six inches taller than Miss Cook. Last night, with bare feet and not tip-toeing, she was four and a half inches taller than Miss Cook. Katie's neck was bare last night; the skin was perfectly smooth, both to touch and sight, whilst on Miss Cook's neck is a large blister, which under similar circumstances is distinctly visible, and rough to the touch. Katie's ears are unpierced, whilst Miss Cook habitually wears ear-rings. Katie's complexion is very fair, while that of Miss Cook is very dark. Katie's fingers are much longer than Miss Cook's, and her face is also larger. In manners and ways of expression there are also many decided differences."

The exceeding whiteness of the drapery with which Katie came clothed was always noticeable; reminding the Scriptural reader of that passage in Mark: "His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow, so as no



fuller on earth can white them." The dress would vary in shape nearly every evening.

The fabric felt material enough. It did not melt away and disappear like the spirit fabrics felt by Mr. Livermore and Dr. Gray in the presence of Kate Fox. Miss Douglas took a specimen of the cloth to Messrs. Howell and James's, London, and asked them to match it; they said that they could not, and that they believed it to be of Chinese manufacture.

Whence came this white drapery? As we proceed in our narrative, it will be seen that Mr. Crookes satisfied himself thoroughly that it could not have been brought into his house and used by the Medium.

Katie had announced, on several occasions, that her materializations through Miss Cook would cease the 21st of May, 1874. At one of her farewell seances, my friend, Mr. Coleman, whom I had some years before introduced to certain phenomena in Boston, was present. He took from his pocket a photograph; Katie received it from his hands, and exclaimed, "This is Dr. Gully and my likeness. What do you want me to do with it?" "Write," said Mr. Coleman, "your name, and any message you have to give me, on the back of it, that I may keep it in remembrance of this evening." Borrowing his pencil she wrote: "Annie Morgan, usually known as Katie King. To her dear friend, Mr. Ben. May 9th, 1874." When it was read aloud some one said, "That is too familiar," and she was reminded that there were others of the same name known to her; upon which she asked for the card to be returned, and wrote: "Mr. Ben is B. Coleman, Esq."

"During the evening," writes Mr. Coleman, "she frequently went behind the curtain to look after her Medium, and once whilst she was there, Mr. Crookes raised the curtain, and he and I, and four others who sat by me, saw, at one and the same time, the figure of Katie, clad in her white dress, bending over the sleeping form of the Medium, whose dress was blue, with a red shawl over her head." This exhibition was then repeated, and Mr. Coleman was fully satisfied that he saw both the living form of Miss Cook, and the materialized Spirit Form of Katie.

The following remarkable incident, which Mr. W. H. Harrison and Mrs. Ross-Church (Florence Marryat) both confirmed in subsequent narratives, indicates the thaumaturgic power that was at work:

"Taking up her skirt in a double fold, Mr. Crookes having lent her his scissors, Katie cut two pieces out of the front part, leaving the holes visible, one about an inch and the other two or three inches in circumference, and then, as if by magic, but without the conjurer's double boxes, or any attempt at concealment, she held that portion of the dress in her closed hand for a minute or two, and showed that the holes had disappeared, and that the dress was again entire. The pieces, a portion of which I have, are apparently strong ordinary white calico." Of the repetition of this marvel at a subsequent seance, Mr. W. H. Harrison writes: "After she had thus cut several great holes in her dress, as she sat between Mr. Crookes and Mr. Tapp, she was asked if she could mend it, as she had done on other occasions; she then held up the dilapidated portion in a good light, gave it one flap, and it was instantly as perfect as at first. Those near the door of the cabinet examined and handled it immediately, with her permission, and testified there was no hole, seam or joint of any kind, where a moment before had been large holes, several inches in diameter.

"Mrs. Ross-Church (Florence Marryat), a daughter of my old acquaintance, Captain Marryat, author of "Peter Simple," &c, was a witness of the same incident, and mentions it in an account of her experiences, which I shall soon quote.

The following is Mr. W. H. Harrison's account of the farewell seance, May 21st, 1874, in London, at which Katie appeared. There were present Mr. Crookes, Mrs. Corner, Mrs. Ross-Church, Mr. W. H. Harrison, Mr. G. R. Tapp, Mr. and Mrs. Cook and family, and the servant Mary:

Mr. Crookes, 7:25 P. M., conducted Miss Cook into the dark room used as a cabinet, where she laid herself down upon the floor, with her head resting on a pillow; at 7:28 Katie first spoke, and at 7:30 came outside the curtain in full form. She was dressed in pure white, with low neck and short sleeves. She had long hair, of a light auburn or golden color, which hung in ringlets down her back, and each side of her head, reaching nearly to her waist. She wore a long white veil, but this was only drawn over her face once or twice during the seance.

"The Medium was dressed in a high gown of light blue merino. During nearly the whole of the seance, while Katie was before us, the curtain was drawn back and all could clearly see the sleeping Medium, who did not stir from her original position, but lay quite still, her face being covered with a

red shawl to keep light from it. There was a good light during the entire seance.

"Katie talked about her approaching departure, and accepted a bouquet which Mr. Tapp brought her, also some bunches of lilies from Mr. Crookes.

"All the sitters in the circle clustered closely round her. Katie asked Mr. Tapp to take the bouquet to pieces, and lay the flowers out before her on the floor; she then sat down, Eastern fashion, and asked all to draw around her, which was done, most of those present sitting on the floor at her feet. She then divided the flowers into bunches for each, tying them up with blue ribbon. She also wrote parting notes to some of her friends, signed 'Annie Owen Morgan,' which she stated was her real name when in earth-life. She wrote a note for her Medium, and selected a fine rosebud for her as a parting gift.

"Katie then took a pair of scissors and cut off a quantity of her hair, giving everybody present a liberal portion. She then took the arm of Mr. Crookes and walked all round the room, slaking hands with each. She again sat down and distributed some of her hair; and also cut off and presented several pieces of her robe and veil..

"She then appeared tired, and said reluctantly that she must go, as the power was failing, and bade farewell in the most affectionate way. The sitters all wished her God speed, and thanked her for the wonderful manifestations she had given. Looking once more earnestly at her friends she let the curtain fall and she was seen no more. She was heard to wake up the Medium, who tearfully entreated her to stay a little longer, but Katie said, 'My dear, I can't. My work is done. God bless you,' and we heard the sound of her parting kiss. The Medium then came out among us, looking much exhausted and deeply troubled."

Katie said that she should never be able to speak or show her face again; that she had had a weary and sad three years 'life working off her sins' in producing these physical manifestations, and that she was about to rise higher in Spirit-life. At long intervals she might be able to communicate with her Medium by writing, but at any time her Medium might be enabled to see her clairvoyantly by being mesmerized."

Mrs. Ross-Church (Florence Marryat), who had been present at three of Katie's last seances, on the 9th, 13th and 21st of May, 1874, in a letter to the London Spiritualist, wrote as follows:

"I will not recapitulate what so many have told of the appearance of the Spirit 'Katie King,' nor of the means taken to prevent any imposition on the part of her Medium. This has all been repeated again and again, and as often disbelieved. But I fined Serjeant Cox, in his late letter on the subject of Miss Showers's mediumship, saying that could such an end be attained as a simultaneous sight of the apparition outside the curtain and the Medium within, 'the most wonderful fact the world has ever witnessed would be established beyond controversy.' Perhaps Serjeant Cox would consider a sight of both Medium and Spirit in the same room and at the same time as convincing a proof of stern truth. I have seen that sight.

"On the evening of the 9th of May, Katie King led me, at my own request, into the room with her beyond the curtain, which was not so dark but that I could distinguish surrounding objects, and then made me kneel down by Miss Cook's prostrate form, and feel her hands and face and head of curls, whilst she (the Spirit) held (my other hand in hers, and leaned against my shoulder, with one arm around my neck.

"I have not the slightest doubt that upon that occasion there were present with me two living, breathing intelligences, perfectly distinct from each other, so far at least as their bodies were concerned. If my senses deceived me; if I was misled by imagination or mesmeric influence into believing that I touched and felt two bodies, instead of one; if 'Katie King,' who grasped, and embraced, and spoke to me, is a projection of thought only--a will-power -- an instance of unknown force--then it will be no longer possible to know 'Who's who, in 1874,' and we shall hesitate to turn up the gas incautiously, lest half our friends should be but projections of thought, and melt away beneath its glare.

"Whatever Katie King was on the evening of the 9th of May, she was not Miss Cook. To that fact I am ready to take my most solemn oath. She repeated the same experiment with me on the 13th, and on that occasion we had the benefit of mutual sight also, as the whole company were invited to crowd around the door whilst the curtain was withdrawn and the gas turned up to the full, in order that we might see the Medium, in her blue dress and

scarlet shawl, lying in a trance on the floor, whilst the white-robed spirit stood beside her.

"On the 21st, however, the occasion of Katie's last appearance amongst us, she was good enough to give me what I consider a still more infallible proof (if one could be needed) of the distinction of her identity from that of her medium. When she summoned me in my turn to say a few words to her behind the curtain, I again saw and touched the warm, breathing body of Florence Cook lying on the floor, and then stood upright by the side of Katie, who desired me to place my hands inside the loose single garment which she wore, and feel her nude body. I did so, thoroughly.

"I felt her heart beating rapidly beneath my hand; and passed my fingers through her long hair to satisfy myself that it grew from her head, and can testify that if she be 'of psychic force,' psychic force is very like a woman.

"Katie was very busy that evening. To each of her friends assembled to say good-by, she gave a bouquet of flowers tied up with ribbon, a piece of her dress and veil, and a lock of her hair, and a note which she wrote with her pencil before us. Mine was as follows: 'From Annie Owen de Morgan (alias Katie King) to her friend, Florence Marryat Ross-Church, with love. Penseza noi. May21st, 1874.' I must not forget to relate what appeared to me to be one of the most convincing proofs of Katie's more than natural power, namely, that when she had cut, before our eyes, twelve or fifteen different pieces of cloth from the front of her white tunic, as souvenirs for her friends, there was not a hole to be seen in it, examine it which way you would. It was the same with her veil, and I have seen her do the same thing several times.

"I think if in the face of all this testimony that has been brought before them, the faithless and unbelieving still credit Miss Cook with the superhuman agility required to leap from the Spirit's dress into her own like a flash of lightning, they will hardly suppose her capable of re-weaving the material of her clothing in the same space of time. If they can believe that, they will not find the spiritualistic doctrine so hard a nut to crack afterwards. But I did not take, up my pen to argue this point, but simply to relate what occurred to myself.'

During the week before Katie took her departure, she gave seances at Mr. Crookes's house almost nightly, to enable him to photograph her by artificial light. In a letter dated July 21st, 1874, and enclosing two photographs, he writes me:

"You may be interested in seeing one of my photographs of Katie, as she stood holding my arm; also one in which she is standing by herself." In the former of these the person of Katie, nearly to her ankles, dressed in her white robe, is taken; in the other, not quite so much of the figure is seen. In both photographs, the drapery is gracefully disposed; the countenance is placid, and the features finely formed though it might not require much imagination to discover in their general expression a spectral look; the figure has all the distinctness of a veritable human being, there being nothing shadowy in the outlines.

Taken in his own laboratory, and under conditions the most satisfactory and unquestionable, these and some forty other photographs which he took, some inferior, some indifferent, and some excellent, confirmed all the previous tests which Mr. Crookes had got of the genuineness of the phenomenon. Frequently, at his own house, he would follow Katie into the cabinet, and would sometimes see her and her Medium together, though generally he would find nobody but the entranced Medium lying on the floor, Katie and her white robes having instantaneously disappeared.

During a period of six months Miss Cook was a frequent visitor at Mr. Crookes's house, remaining there sometimes a week at a time. She would bring nothing but a little handbag, not locked. During the day she would be constantly in the presence of Mrs. or Mr. Crookes, or some other member of his family; and, not sleeping by herself, there was no conceivable opportunity for any fraudulent preparation.

"It was a common thing," says Mr. Crookes, "for the seven or eight of us in the laboratory to see Miss Cook and Katie at the same time under the full blaze of the electric light. We did not on these occasions actually see the face of the Medium, because of the shawl (which had been thrown over to prevent the light from falling on the face), but we saw her hands and feet, we saw her move uneasily under the influence of the intense light, and we heard her moan occasionally. I have one photograph of the two together, but Katie is seated in front of Miss Cook's head."

On one occasion Mr. Crookes was photographed with Katie, she having her bare foot on a particular part of the floor; their relative height was ascertained. Mr. Crookes was then photographed with Miss Cook under precisely similar conditions, and while the two photographs of himself coincide exactly in stature, etc., Miss Cook's figure is found to be half a head shorter than Katie's, and looks small in comparison.

"Photography," adds Mr. Crookes, "is as inadequate to depict the perfect beauty of Katie's face, as words are powerless to describe her charms of manner. Photography may, indeed, give a map of her countenance; but how can it reproduce the brilliant purity of her complexion, or the ever varying expression of her most mobile features, now overshadowed with sadness when relating some of the bitter experiences of her past life, now smiling with all the innocence of happy girlhood when she had collected my children around her, and was amusing them by recounting anecdotes of her adventures in India."

The following particulars given by Mr. Crookes, as to the differences between Katie and the medium, will be found of interest:

"Having seen so much of Katie lately, when she has been illuminated by the electric light, I am enabled to add to the points of difference between her and her Medium which I mentioned in a former article. I have the most absolute certainty that Miss Cook and Katie are two separate, individuals as far as their bodies are concerned. Several little marks on Miss Cook's face are absent on Katie's. Miss Cook's hair is so dark a brown as almost to appear black; a lock of Katie's which is now before me, which she allowed me to cut from her luxuriant tresses, having first traced it up to the scalp and satisfied myself that it actually grew there, is a rich golden auburn.

"On one evening I timed Katie's pulse. It beat steadily at 75, while Miss Cook's pulse, a little time after, was going at its usual rate of 90. On applying my ear to Katie's chest I could hear a heart beating rhythmically inside, and pulsating even more steadily than did Miss Cook's heart when she allowed me to try a similar experiment after the seance. Tested in the same way, Katie's lungs were found to be sounder than her Medium's, for at the time I tried my experiment Miss Cook was under medical treatment for a severe cough."

Of the final parting of Miss Cook and Katie, Mr. Crookes says:

"Having concluded her directions, Katie invited me into the cabinet with her, and allowed me to remain there to the end. After closing the curtain she conversed with me for some time, and then walked across the room to where Miss Cook was lying senseless on the floor. Stooping over her, Katie touched her and said, 'Wake up, Florrie, wake up! I must leave you now.' Miss Cook then woke and tearfully entreated Katie to stay a little time longer.' My dear, I can't; my work is done. God bless you!' replied Katie, and then continued speaking to Miss Cook. For several minutes the two were conversing with each other, till at last Miss Cook's tears prevented her speaking. Following Katie's instructions, I then came forward to support Miss Cook, who was falling on to the floor, sobbing hysterically. I looked around, but the white-robed Katie had gone. As soon as Miss Cook was sufficiently calmed a light was procured and I led her out of the cabinet."

Thus ended this extraordinary series of seances, verifying the stupendous fact of the power of Spirits to manifest themselves in a temporarily materialized human form. To Miss Cook's honesty and good faith Mr. Crookes bears witness in the strongest terms. Every test he proposed she readily submitted to; she was open and straightforward in speech, and never did he see in her conduct anything approaching the slightest symptom of a wish to deceive.

"To imagine," he says, "that a school-girl of fifteen should be able to conceive and then successfully carry out for three years so gigantic an imposture as this, and in that time should submit to any tests which might be imposed upon her, should bear the strictest scrutiny, should be willing to be searched at any time, either before or after a seance, and should meet with even better success in my own house than at that of her parents, knowing that she visited me with the express object of submitting to strict scientific tests--to imagine, I say, the 'Katie King' of the last three years to be the result of imposture--does more violence to one's reason and common sense than to believe her to be what she herself affirms."

When to these considerations is added the fact that the phenomena through Miss Cook have been recently paralleled and even surpassed by numerous similar well-attested phenomena, not only in England, but in America, what escape is there from the conclusion that they are wholly inexplicable under any theory of imposture or delusion?"



# Testimony about Katie King in Epes Sargent's book "The proof palpable of immortality", part 1

Testimony about Katie King in Epes Sargent's book "[The proof palpable of immortality, being an account of the materialization phenomena of modern spiritualism](#)", published for the first time 1875, p. 43-67:

(the second part of Epes Sargent's text about Katie King is in the next blogpost)

"The 12th of May, 1874, a spirit calling herself "Katie King" appeared in a materialized form at a seance in Philadelphia, Mr. and Mrs. Holmes being the mediums. Dr. Henry T. Child, himself a "sensitive/" and at the same time an experienced and studious investigator, was present. He writes that on the 5th of June, while he and Robert Dale Owen were among the witnesses, Katie King appeared in "a very beautiful shape, clothed in white robes." June 7th, they had a long conversation with Katie at the cabinet, window. She allowed Dr. Child to count her pulse ; it was about seventy- two per minute, and perfectly natural. She also permitted him to see her tongue, and asked if he thought she was "right well"

Mr. Owen was of the opinion that the "Katie King," or " Annie Morgan, " who thus appeared, was identical with the spirit who for three years communicated through Miss Cook in London. There were many circumstances, however, that threw doubt on the identity. The features were unlike those of the London Katie. In London the Holmeses, one or both, had been proved to possess remarkable medial powers; but it was also charged that they would sometimes eke out their manifestations with imposture. It will be seen further on in my narrative (page 114) that both Mr. Owen and Dr. Child, having encountered what seemed to them doubtful features in the phenomena, withdrew their confidence and publicly expressed their dissatisfaction. When we consider that they

had been forewarned by English investigators that frauds might be anticipated, the wonder is that they should have been so over-sanguine in their expressions of confidence under the circumstances. That genuine phenomena were given, however, there is now every reason to believe. The whole subject of spirit materialization was thrown under a cloud for a time by the conflicting statements growing out of the Holmes affair. But as the phenomena through other mediums were multiplied, and test conditions were adopted, and the number of witnesses greatly increased, the affair gradually dwindled into insignificance.

In weighing charges of imposture, it should be borne in mind by investigators, that however the ignorant may scout and ridicule the idea, it is nevertheless probable that under certain inharmonious conditions such mischievous spirits may be attracted as will force an unconscious medium to do things automatically which, to the inexperienced, look like deliberate frauds on his part. The more we study the phenomena the larger becomes our charity for the sensitives through whose peculiar receptiveness to influences good or bad the wonders are wrought.

The power of spirits to reproduce simulacra of persons who have passed from the earth-life suggests the question, How far can we be assured of the identity of any spirit, let the tests be what they may ? We have not yet arrived at that stage of enlightenment that would enable us to reply confidently to this inquiry. The John Kings and the Katie Kings who have come in the full form, and conversed with mortals, have not yet given proofs of their identity, that can be substantiated by documentary evidence. In claiming to have been Sir Henry Morgan and a contemporary of Raleigh, John King does not give us such minute corroborative proofs as must be had before his declaration can be accepted.

There is much that is yet a puzzle in the language and action of this class of materialized spirits. How far they are limited in their mental operations and in their recollections

by the act of materialization, or how far by the intellectual horizon of the medium, is still a question. In other cases, proofs of identity, both mental and physical, satisfactory to the recipients, have been given, as Mr. Hazard, Mrs. A. A. Andrews, and others from whom I have quoted, testify.

It is satisfactory to discover that the further we proceed in investigation the more apparent does it become, that if there are deceptive, frivolous, immature spirits, there are also those who are sincere, intelligent, affectionate and earnest in their efforts to do good. The great majority, as in this world, are of the unintellectual sort. Perhaps the development of a spiritual sense in ourselves is needed before we can have a confirmation, that can be conclusive, of identity. Perhaps, under mortal and spiritual limitations as they now are, we can have only an approximate assurance. The science of Spiritualism being still in its infancy, we may hope for more light on this question.

As for the Orthodox notion that "the devil is the only spirit authorized to communicate with the laity," and that all spiritual communications that do not come through certain prescribed channels are Satanic, this will hardly weigh with people of common sense engaged in a strictly scientific investigation.

"Nothing is so brutally conclusive as a fact," says Broussais; and, therefore, facts must win in the long run. The truth itself, and not our mere conceptions of what ought to be true, must ultimately prevail.

Meanwhile we see the significance of the caution to us to "try the spirits;" to try them not by conjuration through this or that name, however sacred, but by our reason, the purification of our motives, and the singleness of our aspirations for the truth.

Plainly it is not the proved law of our being, that we should surrender to any one, mortal or immortal, the custody of our

individuality, our reason, and our self respect. Every earnest and rational spirit, whether in the flesh or out of it, at the same time that he has relations to the universe, and the universe to him, would seem to be impelled by the environments, the restrictions, and the varied experiences to which he is subjected, and by the fallacies with which he soon finds that all human teachings and interpretations are mixed, to exercise his own reason, to discipline his own powers, and to develop his own individuality; end, while courting all good influences, to resist the dictation of those who would constrain him, by aught else than appeals to his sense of right, to adopt their opinions or walk in their ways.

Think as I do, or drink the hemlock," embodies in words the monster sin that is not confined to mortals or to ancient Athens. As there were spirits of old who would try to force a way for their authority by a " Thus saith the Lord," so there are spirits now who claim a divine infallibility when they can find dupes to heed them.

Spiritualism enforces upon us the fact that in being loosened by death from this exterior husk we call a body, the veritable man is not greatly changed. With a corresponding organism of subtler elements, he starts on his new career from the vantage-ground, low or high, which he has attained to here. Condition follows character ; and the spiritual environments which our prevailing thoughts and affections, our noblenesses or our meannesses, have created for us in this life, will impart their beauty or their deformity to our objective surroundings on our entrance into what is now to us the unseen world.

The news of the manifestations through Mrs. Andrews, at Moravia, N. Y., was received by Spiritualists in England with some incredulity, accompanied by a wish to ascertain if similar phenomena could be had through their own mediums. Accordingly, several of these began to sit for spirit forms. The faces appeared at the seances of Mrs. Guppy, and subsequently Messrs. Heme and Williams succeeded in obtaining these manifestations at dark circles, the spirits manufacturing

a light of their own, which they held in their hands to show themselves by.

Certain phenomena in the presence of Miss Florence Eliza Cook, a young lady of fifteen, daughter of a member of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, began to attract attention in England the latter part of the year 1871. The spirits producing these manifestations claimed to be John and Katie King, and their daughter Katie ; but Morgan, they said, was their true earth- name ; and Katie, on several occasions, would sign herself, Katie King, properly Annie Morgan.

At numerous seances in America, and at those of Heme and Williams, in England, spirits calling themselves John and Katie King have frequently manifested themselves. The name King would seem, for some reason, to be a favorite one among the class of spirits giving physical manifestations.

"John King" used to make himself audible, at an early period, at the sittings of the Davenport Brothers; and, subsequently, at those of Jonathan Koons, in Dover, Athens Co., Ohio, where he once made a long address, written by a spirit hand apposed to be his own, in which he calls himself, a "servant and scholar of God," and says: "We know that our work will be rejected by many, and condemned as the production of their King Devil, whom they profess to repudiate, but do so constantly serve by crucifying truth and rejecting all that is contrary to their own narrow pride and vain imaginings."

In manifesting himself through the English mediums, John King claimed to be identical with this spirit, and it cannot be denied that a certain unity of speech and character has distinguished him on these occasions. He asserted that his name on earth was Sir Henry Morgan, and that he was a contemporary of Sir Walter Raleigh.

The 20th of March, 1873, at a sitting in London, of which

full particulars are given by the well-known publisher, Mr. James Burns, in "Human Nature/" for April, 1873, the spirit claiming to be John King manifested himself in a materialized form so successfully that a sketch was made of him by a skillful artist. The seance took place in the daylight, Charles E. Williams being the medium. This sitting was followed by another the next week (March 27th), when John King appeared visibly, as before, as solid and material as an ordinary human being, while the medium's hands were held by Mrs. Burns, and he sat entranced in his seat.

On this last occasion the spirit spoke aloud, saying : "You won't doubt any more, will you? It is God's truth, is it not? It is a glorious truth. God bless you! It is. God bless you!" Having more than satisfied the sitters, he withdrew inside the cabinet, but returned to the aperture to renew the colloquy. While Mrs. Burns dragged the medium's hands through the door of the cabinet into full view, John King also showed his at the window: the test was complete.

Of the sincerity and intelligence of Mrs. Burns, no one who has made her acquaintance, as I have, can doubt.

The genuineness of the mediumship of Mr. Williams has been tested by Prince Wittgenstein and others, who have satisfied themselves of the objective appearance of "John King" and his wonderful lamp. Even Serjeant Cox admits that he has found Mr. Williams "most trustworthy." On the 14th of May, 1874, at a seance held at the house of Mr. Chinnery, in Paris, 52 Rue de Rome, when John King with his lamp was seen, a young man rushed forward to seize the spirit. The latter eluded his grasp, leaving behind only a small portion of the drapery which covered the form. A light was struck, and the medium was found entranced in his chair. He was searched, but nothing in the slightest degree suspicious was discovered. What had become of the drapery? The integrity of Mr. Williams was fully vindicated.

At some experiments at Mr. Cook's house, April 21st, 1872,

of which Mr. W. H. Harrison, editor of the London Spiritualist, has given an account, a dark seance for the voices was held, Miss Cook and Mr. Heme being the mediums. The following remarkable incident occurred: A tapping was heard upon one of the window panes; the bar of the shutter was unlocked and taken down, and the shutter opened, and John King's voice said: "Cook, you must take that plug out of the gutter, if you don't want the foundations of your house sapped. The gutter is stopped up." On examination this proved to be true. It had been raining, and the area was full of water. Nobody inside the house knew of this until told in this remarkable way.

" Strangely human all this!" you will say; "so strangely human, that we think there must have been a human personator of the spirit ! " But, as I shall have stranger things than this to relate by and by, I will only pause to remark that the incident is in full harmony with occurrences the confirmation of which, under test conditions, is ample.

We now approach the early manifestations through Miss Cook, in whose presence the phenomena eventually became so marked. On the 22d of April, 1872, a seance was held at which Mrs. Cook, the children, and the servant were witnesses. In the endeavor to abolish dark seances, Mr. Harrison had made experiments with different kinds of light. He had tried, at Mr. Cook's house, a phosphorescent light, made by coating the inside of a warm bottle with phosphorus dissolved in oil of cloves, and then letting in the air.

The oil was left at Mr. Cook's, as will be learnt by the following passage from a letter from Miss Cook herself to Mr. Harrison, under date of April 23d, 1872. I quote the passage because it is interesting as giving us some notion of the intellectual calibre of the writer, Miss Cook, who was soon to become so famous as a medium :

" Yesterday afternoon Katie told us that if we liked to put up a cabinet of curtains for her, she would try to show us

something, but as I was not developed enough for her to take enough phosphorus from me to show her face by, we were to give her some of your phosphoric oil, I was delighted, and at half-past eight yesterday evening all was ready. Mamma, auntie, the children, and the servant stood on the stairs. I was left alone (not in my glory, for I was very frightened) inside the breakfast-room. Katie began by giving mamma some fresh ivy leaves; none were in our house or garden of the size she brought. A hand and arm with a white sleeve came to the opening holding the bottle of oil; then, at the lower opening in the curtain, came a face, unveiled, the head covered with a quantity of pure white drapery. Katie held the bottle to her face so that all outside could see her plainly. She remained for quite two minutes. It was an oval face, straight nose, bright eyes, and a very pretty mouth. She again came to the opening, her lips moved, and at last she spoke. All outside could see her lips moving; she talked with mamma some few minutes. I could not see her face plainly, so asked her to turn and show me. She said, 'Of course I will,' came to my chair and bent over me. She was materialized only to the bust. From there she went into a cloud, slightly luminous. She told mamma to look at her carefully, and made the observation that "she knew she looked most unearthly". It was indeed very startling. I was too frightened to move or call out when she came near me. She used no tubes for speaking. The last time she appeared she stayed quite five minutes, and directed mamma to send to you, asking you if you could come here one day this week. . . . Katie King finished her seance with "God bless you all. I am so pleased to show myself."

On the occasion here referred to by Miss Cook, the face of Katie King was described by Mrs. Cook, as "looking white and deathlike, while her eyes were fixed and staring, as if made of glass."

At a seance at Mr. Cook's, April 25th, 1872, Katie made several efforts to materialize a form. Mr. W. H. Harrison was present. He has given a curious description of some of



the performances. The medium, Miss Cook, sat in a dark room. A scraping noise was heard; Katie had some spirit drapery in her hand, which she rubbed down over the medium to collect some of the "influence" used by spirits in materialization. A conversation, in low tones, varied with an occasional scraping noise, then took place between Florence Cook and the spirit :

Miss Cook— Go away, Katie; I don't like to be scraped.

Katie— Don't be stupid. Take that thing off your head and look at me. (Scrape, scrape.)

Miss Cook— I won't. Go away, Katie; I don't like you. You frighten me.

Katie— Don't be silly. (Scrape, scrape, scrape.)

Miss Cook— I won't sit for these manifestations. I don't like them. Go away.

Katie— You are only my medium, and a medium is nothing but a machine. (Scrape, scrape.)

Miss Cook— Well, if I am only a machine, I don't like to be frightened. Go away.

Katie— Don't be stupid.

Miss Cook, who as yet had not been entranced by the spirit, said that the spirit's head and shoulders were materialized; but below, her form melted into thin air. Katie would be sometimes high up and sometimes low down, so that the bust nearly touched the floor, in which position she looked "most unearthly." It sometimes appeared as if a head were "wandering about with no legs or body, visible or invisible."

At the next sitting Miss Cook was entranced by the spirit, and a little benzoline lamp was used for seeing the material-

ization. The spirit would cry out "higher," or "lower," as she wanted the light adjusted. Mr. Harrison gives the following interesting account of what occurred:

"Katie's face came out, all the rest of the head being bandaged round with white, 'in order,' she said, 'to keep the power by which she materialized herself from passing away too quickly.' She said that only her face and not all her head was materialized. This time all present had a good look at her, and saw her features. It was remarked that her eyes were closed. Each time the face came out for, perhaps, half a minute. Afterwards she said, 'Willie, see me smile,' and, again, 'see me talk,' suiting the action to the word. Then she said, 'Now, Cook, turn on the light.'

"The light was turned fully up, sending a bright glare upon the face for an instant, and for the first time Katie King was clearly seen. She had a young, pretty, happy face, and sparkling eyes, with some little mischief in them. It was not ghastly, as when Mrs. Cook and family saw it, on April 22d, 'because,' said Katie, 'I know now how to do it better.'

"When her face in its natural colors was seen in full light, nearly all the observers said, 'We can see you all right now, Katie.' 'Well, then,' said, she, 'clap!' Accordingly, there was a shower of applause, in which Katie joined by thrusting out her arm and hand, holding a fan taken from the mantelpiece; with the fan she began to gleefully beat the wall outside the door, and to ring the bells hanging above the door.

"During the interval of one hour for supper, Mr. Thomas Blyton came in, and he was present at the next sitting. Katie showed herself as before. Once she said, 'Put out the light, and strike a match when I call'. This was done, and at the moment of the striking of the match, her face was again seen for an instant in a full light. She showed her face a second time in the same way. Once she said, 'Cook, don't gaze at me too fixedly; it hurts me.' On another occasion she said, 'The

light hurts me; it makes me feel tired.' All along she was very careful in adjusting the amount of light, and the distance of the sitters from the curtains. Now and then she said, 'Sing, sing, all of you.' Singing evidently helped her as much as at an ordinary seance.

"She threw out about a yard of white fabric, but kept hold of it by the other end, saying, 'Look, this is spirit drapery.' I said, 'Drop it into the passage, Katie, and let us see it melt away; or let us cut a piece off.' She replied, 'I can't; but look here!' She then drew back her hand, which was above the top of the curtain, and, as the spirit drapery touched the curtain, it passed right through, just as if there were no resistance whatever.

"She then threw it out again, and again the yard of drapery passed through the curtain. It was a clear case of something which looked like solid matter passing through solid matter, and we all saw it. I think that at first there was friction between the two fabrics, and that they rustled against each other; but that when she said 'Look here!' some quality which made the drapery common matter was withdrawn from it, and at once it passed through the common matter of the curtain, without experiencing any resistance."

Mr. Blyton, in a published communication, confirms all that is reported as occurring in his presence, by Mr. Harrison. "At times, when speaking," says Mr. Blyton, "Katie's features were very natural and human. On our requesting to see a piece of the white drapery, the spirit held out a strip from the opening, resembling muslin in appearance. On her withdrawing her arm and hand, this white spirit drapery disappeared through the curtain. This passing of the drapery through the curtain was repeated several times."

As Miss Cook's mediumship grew in power, she was placed above the temptation of exercising it for gain. Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Manchester, with a wise liberality, and in the cause of science, supplied the means for this.

For a long time only a feeble light was permitted at the manifestations of spirit forms. The face of the spirit would be covered with white drapery, the chief use of which was said to be to economize the power by enabling the spirit to leave part of the head unmaterialized.

As the developments went on, Katie began to exhibit not only the whole of her bare face, but her hands and arms, in a strong light. In these early stages, Miss Cook was almost always awake during the manifestations ; but sometimes, when the weather was bad, or other conditions were unfavorable, Katie would entrance her, the purpose of which was simply to increase the power, and to prevent the mental activity of the medium from operating as an interference. After a time Katie never appeared without the medium being in a trance.

Some sittings for recognizable faces were had in the presence of Miss Cook; but they began, as did Katie's manifestation, in a weak light, and were imperfect. They were abandoned, therefore, for the more marked phenomenon in which a certain success had been won. Two instances, however, in which recognizable faces were presented through Miss Cook's mediumship, occurred, and seem to have been well authenticated.

At a sitting at Hackney, Jan. 20th, 1873, Katie changed her face from white to black in a few seconds, several times ; and to show that her hands were not mechanically moved, she sewed up a hole in the curtain. On the 12th of March, at Hackney, Miss Cook's hands being tied and sealed, Katie, with her hands perfectly free, walked out of the cabinet. A month or two later, several photographs were taken of Katie, under strictly test conditions, and by the magnesium light \*

Thus it was not till after many imperfect trials and partial materializations, accompanied with very gradual developments of increasing force, that the spirit Katie, in the full

human form, and habited in white, as represented in her

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\* An account of these sittings, by Mr. J. C. Luxmoore. Justice of the Peace for the County of Devon, may be found in the London Spiritualist of May 15th, 1873.

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photographs, came forth in the light from the cabinet, and walked about the room before a semi-circle of spectators.

Dr. J. M. Gully, formerly of Great Malvern, England, a thoroughly experienced physician and a careful investigator, under date of July 20th, 1874, writes me as follows:

" To the special question which you put regarding my experiences of the materialization of the spirit-form, with Miss Cook's mediumship, I must reply that, after two years\* examination of the fact and numerous seances, I have not the smallest doubt, and have the strongest conviction, that such materialization takes place, and that not the slightest attempt at trick or deception is fairly attributable to any one who assisted at Miss Cook's seances.

"That the power grows with use was curiously illustrated by the fact that, for some time, only a face was producible, with, occasionally, arms and hands; with no hair, and sometimes with no back to the skull at all— merely a mask, with movement, however, of eyes and mouth. Gradually the whole form appeared— after, perhaps, some five months of seances — once or twice a week. This again became more and more rapidly formed, and changed, in hair, dress, and color of face, as we desired.

" The voice came long before the whole form of the body, but was always husky, and as if there was a whispering catarrh ; save when she joined us in singing, when she gave out a most lovely contralto.

The feel of the skin was quite natural, soft and warm ; her movements were natural and graceful, except when she stooped to pick up anything from the floor, when it seemed as if her legs as well as her trunk bent backwards.

" When that photograph\* was taken, I held her hand for at least two minutes, three several times, for we sat three times for it on one and the same evening ; but I was constrained to close my eyes by reason of the intense magnesium light which shone directly upon me ; moreover she desired that

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\* The well-known published photograph, in which Katie is represented standing with Dr. Gully sitting at her side and holding her hand.

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none of us would gaze at her whilst the lens was directed upon her.

" I believe that much information might have been obtained from her concerning the *outré-tombe*, but the circle seemed always bent on talking chaff to her, complimenting her, and indulging in ordinary inconsequential conversation; for only on one or two occasions was I (who hate all the nonsense that was said to and by her) able to put a few questions on the subjects about which every thoughtful Spiritualist is naturally anxious.

" It may be questioned whether these spirit beings can convey anything like an accurate idea of their state and powers ; but I believe that, just as their power of physical manifestation augments with use, so would their power of mental communication increase were an intelligent curiosity always presented for their sympathetic reply. In fact, I believe that if less idle and more serious curiosity was felt by the circles, spirits of a higher and more powerful character would sympathetically come and teach by vocal words, written words, inspired words.

"So soon as a man has convinced himself of the reality of the spirit-presence, and the absence of all deception, he should, I think, use all his will power to place his own spirit in a state of reception for spirit knowledge, and feel assured he will get it. Physical manifestations are the alphabet of the subject, and if Spiritualism went no further it would do but little for humanity.

"But I quite believe in your suggestion, that, carried out to its consequences in thought and sympathy, it is destined to abolish a thick cloud of darkness which at present renders all religions more or less superstitious, and all philosophy a mere circle; and to substitute a light which will enable the mind in a body to hold communion with minds whose freedom enables them to see the workings of Great Cause and Great Effect, and so to bring forth a philosophic religion; whilst philosophy itself will be able to look ever onwards instead of going round and round, as it has done from Plato to Mill, tedious to study, and barren of result."

Similar materializations to those through Miss Cook had taken place not unfrequently in America, at seances where the light was very dim. Mr. Home, Mrs. Mary Hardy, Messrs. Bastian and Taylor, Mrs. Maud Lord, Mrs. Jennie Lord Webb, and others had, while sitting in the dark or in twilight, satisfied many of the presence of materialized spirits, who made themselves felt and heard, if they could not be distinctly seen. The materializations through Miss Kate Fox had satisfied Mr. Livermore, Dr. Gray, and Mr. Grouse of the objective reality of the appearing forms.

But the bold and startling manifestations through Miss Cook, occurring in the light, and in the presence of a dozen or more spectators, were peculiarly impressive and satisfactory; and I give prominence to her case on this account. The manifestations, after the initiatory experiments had been made, were conducted under strict test conditions, and in the presence of persons of well-known character and intelligence, whose single object was the establishment of the truth; the

apparition, being visible under the most powerful light, and solid to the touch, could be subjected to tests which were eventually supplied by scientific men and found satisfactory ; and the medium, being exempted from all necessity of asking pay from the investigators, was comparatively independent and free in allowing the manifestations to take their course.

At a sitting at Mr. Luxmoore's, Nov. 18th, 1873, a witness, well known to me personally, Mr. Benjamin Coleman, was present, and from his account I have abridged the following :

The seance was given in the large drawing-room, in which an ordinary fire was kept burning throughout the evening. The small drawing-room, separated by sliding doors, was appropriated as a cabinet, and a dark curtain was hung between the open parts, by which all light was excluded. A lamp was placed on the table of the audience room, where there was a fire, and at no time was it dark. The fourteen ladies and gentlemen, who formed a horse-shoe circle in front of the cabinet, could see each other the whole evening.

A low chair was placed in the cabinet, upon which Miss Cook, the medium, was seated-, and Mr. Coleman and Mr. Blackburn were invited by Mr. Luxmoore to see her secured. Her hands were tied together with tape, the ends of which were sewn and sealed with wax; and then the tape was passed around her waist, and tightly knotted and sewn, and sealed again. The tape was then passed through a staple in the floor, leaving a slack of about a foot, and there knotted again. Thus it was impossible for Miss Cook to move from her seat more than a few inches.

The ties were all found secure, and the line of tape undisturbed, after the seance; and even had this precaution not been taken, the fact that, the instant Katie disappeared, the medium was found tied and differently clad, and asleep in her chair, would have satisfied any reasonable person that there was no trick or attempt to deceive. Whatever the figure of Katie might be, it evidently was not Miss Cook.



The figure of Katie entered the room. She was clad in a loose white dress, tied in at the waist, having long sleeves terminating at the wrists, with a close hood on her head, long lappets hanging over her shoulders, and her hair closely banded.

She at once saluted each of the company in turn, first asking the name of the only stranger unknown to the medium. Mr. Coleman asked Katie if she had shoes and stockings on. She said, "No," and at once drew aside her dress, and showed that her feet were naked ; and to satisfy all, she raised one foot on to the dress of Mrs. Corner, in the most natural manner, and said, " Now you can all see that I have bare feet, can't you ? "

There were pencils and sheets of writing paper on the table, and Mr. Coleman asked her if she would be good enough to write something for him. "Yes, I will," she said, taking a chair, and sitting down on it. "What shall I write?" Mr. Coleman said he was engaged in getting up a testimonial to Judge Edmonds, and perhaps she might have something to say to him.

Upon this Katie raised one knee, and commenced writing; but, finding the position uncomfortable, asked for something hard "to rest the paper upon". This being supplied, she wrote off the following letter : —

"My Dear Friend— You have asked me to write a few words to you. I wish you every success with regard to Judge Edmonds's testimonial. He is a good man, and an earnest worker. Give him my affectionate greeting. I know him well, although he does not know me. My power is going, so with every good wish,

I am your sincere friend, Katie King,  
"Properly Annie Morgan. "

The letter was handed back to Mr. Coleman, who read it

aloud, and then said to her, "I see you have not addressed it;" she took it back and deliberately folded it upon her knee, and wrote on the back, "Mr. Coleman."

On his requesting her to let him feel the texture of her dress, she replied by coming round past the back of Mr. Luxmoore's chair sideways, as there was barely room to pass, and holding up the dress to Mr. C; he took it with both hands, and pulled it, and it was to all appearance, in substance, as if it were made of strong white calico. She then passed round the circle and shook hands, by gently touching the hands of each. Both her hands and her face throughout the seance were of a perfectly natural color, the reverse of pallid; her cheeks were red, and hands decidedly so; in fact, her whole appearance was that of a gentle and graceful young woman. She stooped down to pick up two sheets of paper which were in her way whilst crossing the room, and stepped aside to lay them on the table.

"This completed," writes Mr. Coleman, "the impression, which all must have felt, that we had been for an hour and a half holding intercourse with an intelligent living woman, who glided, rather than walked about, and who showed by her constant watchfulness of the medium, that there was the tie to which she was bound. It was altogether a marvelous exhibition."

Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein, who was present at a seance at Mr. Luxmoore's, December 16th, 1873, published in the *Revue Spirite*, of Paris, an account of it, which was translated by Dr. G-. L. Ditson, from whose version I quote most of the following:

" The gauze curtain of the cabinet was agitated, and a naked arm was thrust forth and made a sign. Then the right side of the hanging was opened, giving us a view of an apparition of ravishing beauty. She stood erect; the right arm was across her breast, the other fell at her side, holding the curtain. She seemed to review the persons present. It was

the spirit of Katie, a thousand times more lovely than her photograph.

"I had before me a young lady of an ideal beauty, supple, elegant, and clad in most graceful drapery, with chestnut locks visible through her white veil. Her robe, trailing like that of an antique statue, entirely covered her naked feet. Her arms, of surpassing beauty, delicate, white, were visible to the shoulders. Their attachment to the body was finely statuesque ; and the hands, a little large, had long, tapering fingers, rosy to the ends.

"Her face was pale and rather round than oval. Her mouth, smiling, shewed beautiful teeth. Her nose was aquiline ; her eyes were very large and blue, almond-shaped, shaded by long, heavy eyelashes, and having eyebrows delicately arched. And, to conclude, there was in this apparition the grace of a Psyche descended from her pedestal.

"Yet this rare feminine embodiment, this faithful reproduction of one many years dead, was soon to evaporate and disappear like a breath! One might mistake her, seen from a distance, for Miss Cook; but the apparition was large, with slender waist, while Miss Cook, though pretty, is much smaller, and her hands are not as large as Katie's. There could be no mistake: they were two distinct personalities.

"The apparition seemed to regard me with curiosity, and I saw in her something that reminded me of a spectre, and that was the eye. It was as beautiful as possible, yet it had a haggard, fixed, glassy expression; but in spite of that, with mouth smiling, with bosom heaving, she seemed to say, "I am happy to be a moment among mortals". She then remarked, in a sort of tremulous whisper, but with infinite grace, 'I cannot yet go far away from my medium, but soon I shall have more force.' When she was not fully understood, she repeated her words with infantile impatience.

" I asked to be favored with a sight of her foot; she grace-

fully raised her robe to comply with my request, and, when being solicited to show more of it, the robe was lifted to the ankle, and I saw a delicate foot, like that of an antique statue, white, plump, lovely as a child's, high and arched, the toes finely attached, and of a purity of design irreproachable ; but all this ensemble was as if of one piece, and the real life was wanting.

" Katie King talked, laughed, chatted pleasantly with those present, calling each one by name with a roguish, infantile, defiant vivacity; gesticulating with her right hand as do the women of the Orient, with the movement of the fingers and curvature of the hand peculiar to that people; accenting her words with the most gracious movement of her head; often with gentle modesty gathering her veil about her neck; in a word, in everything, in her features, form, costume, gestures, giving an impression of the women of the Levant that could not be mistaken.

" A man of little intelligence, who was present, having addressed some rude words to Katie, she crumpled some paper in her hand, and threw it at him with an expression of disdain.'

As an evidence of the spirit's clairvoyant powers, Prince Wittgenstein sends the following to the London Spiritualist of July 10th, 1874, in a letter from Nieder Walluf, on the Rhine :

" A very striking fact, in direct writing, was recently obtained by Miss Cook, at my request, putting my sealed letter at night on her dressing table, with some pencils and sheets of paper near it. The letter, closely sealed by me, was further put into a second envelope by Mr. William Crookes, who also sealed it several times with his private signet.

When it was sent back to me with Katie's answer, his seals, as well as mine, were quite intact.

" Katie copied the contents of my sealed letter to her, word

for word, without a mistake or omission, on a separate sheet of paper. She also wrote an answer to me, with the following postscript :

"I have given a copy of your letter, dear friend, to show you I have really read it. I must trust to your good nature to excuse any errors, as I have never done anything like this before.— A. Morgan, or Katie King."

Dr. George Sexton was for many years one of the most earnest of the secularist teachers, and an energetic lecturer against Spiritualism and all other forms of belief in a future life. After fifteen years of skepticism, during which, however, he did not disdain to investigate, the needful evidence came. In his own house, in the absence of all mediums other than those members of his own family and intimate private friends in whom mediumistic powers became developed, he got evidence of an irresistible character that the communications came from deceased friends and relatives.

Dr. Sexton's first attendance on the manifestation through Miss Cook, took place at Mr. Luxmoore's, Nov. 25th, 1873. The usual precautions for the satisfaction of skeptics were taken. Tied as she was, it seemed to him impossible for Miss Cook to remove from her seat more than a few inches. We quote the concluding portion of his testimony:

"The seance commenced, as is usual, with singing. The lights were turned down, but not so low as to prevent our seeing each other most distinctly, and being eye-witnesses of all that was taking place in the room. The medium speedily became partially entranced, hands were shown at a small aperture at the top of the cabinet, and Katie gave indications of being present. Soon after, the curtain was moved aside, and the full form of the spirit, dressed in white, was distinctly seen by all present.

"Katie requested me to ask her questions, which I did continually for at least half an hour. These questions were mostly of a semi-philosophic character, having reference

mainly to the laws and conditions under which spirits assume materialized forms, and such, therefore, as it is very questionable whether a young lady like the medium would have been able to answer. They were all replied to so satisfactorily that more than one well-known and highly-educated Spiritualist present stated that they had obtained information which they had previously often wished for, but could not procure.

"The spirit form came out of the cabinet several times during the evening, and walked about amongst the audience. She showed her feet, which were perfectly naked, and stamped them on the floor to prove that she was not standing on tip-toe, this latter fact being a very important one, seeing that she was at least four inches taller than Miss Cook. Her figure and complexion were almost totally unlike those of the medium. She came across the room to me, patted me on the head, and returned. I then asked her if she would kiss me. She replied she would try to do so. In a few minutes she again crossed over to me, and kissed me on the forehead three or four times. I may here remark that although the sound of the kisses were distinctly heard by all present, and the attitude of the figure seen, I felt no pressure of the lips whatever.

"Toward the end of the seance the spirit requested me to examine the cabinet to see that the medium was still fastened in her chair. Mr. Luxmoore lifted the curtain, and said, 'She is still there, lying down in the corner.' The curtain was then dropped again, and I, being on the opposite side of the room, had, of course, not seen into the cabinet. The spirit immediately inquired, 'Did Dr. Sexton see that?' I replied, 'No, I did not.' 'Then,' she said, 'come and look; I want you to see.'

" I at once crossed over to the cabinet, raised the curtain, and looked in. There I saw Miss Cook, sitting, or rather lying, in a trance on the chair in which she had been fastened, knots, seals, and all intact. The seance continued for some-

thing over an hour. I may remark that the spirit in the course of the evening wrote several short notes to persons present. The following was the substance of the one given to me :

"My Dear Dr. Sexton— I am pleased you have asked me questions. Yours, truly, Annie Morgan."

" Thus ended one of the most marvelous seances at which it has ever been my good fortune to be present."

Dr. J. M. Gully, from whose letter to myself I have already given an extract, was for many years at the head of the well-known water-cure establishment at Great Malvern, England, and is known to thousands of Americans as a skillful and scientific physician and a thoroughly estimable gentleman. He satisfied himself of the genuineness of the manifestations through Mr. Home, several years ago. The 28th of November, 1873, he was present at Mr. Luxmoore's, at one of Miss Cook's seances, of which he gives the following account :

"The spirit, Katie King, appeared this time dressed in a longer and more flowing white dress than usual, the sleeves reaching to the wrists and bound there, whilst over her head and face a beautifully transparent veil fell, giving to the whole figure an appearance of grace and purity which is not easily conveyed by words.

The spirit greeted every one in the circle by name ; then retired into the dark room, where she was heard moving heavy furniture about, and talking to the medium who was sealed and bound as usual. She then brought a large bowl into the circle and gave it to the hands of a sitter. Afterwards she brought a low chair, or prie-dieu, out of the dark room, and placed it wholly in the circle, sat down upon it, and desired that the sitters should sing, but not loudly, as she would try to join them, which she did with the clear contralto voice which she has several times exhibited. It is impossible to convey the impression of that voice issuing from

an inhabitant of the *outretombe*!

She then begged that all would join hands in order that she might get all the possible power for what she wished to do, and whilst we, the sitters, did so, she retired for a minute or two to get fresh power from her medium, returned, and then deliberately walked around the entire circle (composed of fourteen persons) and touched each one in turn, some of the ladies on the cheek, the men on the hands; one man she told to put out his hand and she would show him that she could press it, which she did. The circle occupied a great portion of a large-sized drawing-room. She then desired to be questioned, and something like this colloquy took place :

"Is it possible for you to explain to us what are the powers or forces you employ in materializing and dissolving your form ?" *"No, it is not."* "Is it electricity, or does it bear any resemblance to it?" *"No ; it is all nonsense what thy talk about electricity."* "But have you no name or mode of conveying it?" *"It is more like will-power than anything else; in fact, it is the will which is at the bottom of the power I exercise."* "When you disappear where is it to?" *"Into the medium, giving her back all the vitality I took from her. When I have got very much power from her, if any one of you were to take her suddenly round the waist and try to carry her, you might kill her on the spot: she might suffocate. I can go in and out of her readily, but, understand, I am not her — not her double; they talk a deal of rubbish about doubles; I am myself all the time."* "When you dissolve, which part disappears the first, the body or the dress ?" *"The body, of course ; its material power goes back to her, and then the dress goes into its elements."* "Do you think one in the flesh can ever appreciate the powers you use in manifesting ?" *"No; you never can."* ( You speak of being yourself, and not a double of the medium— who were you when in the flesh ?" *"I to as Annie Morgan."* "Were you married ?" *"Yes; but don't talk of that."* (At this she retired behind the curtain, apparently either hurt or grieved at the question, a state she has exhibited before when questioned about her married life.) She speedily returned, and was



asked, "Have you a husband now?" *"Of course I have."* "Can you give us any idea under what reign you lived?" *"I left the body when I was twenty-one years old, and I lived in the latter part of the reign of Charles I., during the Commonwealth, and to the early part of the reign of Charles II. I remember the high peaked hats of the Commonwealth and the broad hats of Charles I. and II.; the short hair of the men, but Cromwell's was not short."* "

" At this point the time which had been agreed on as the utmost that could be given, having the health of the medium in regard, was reached, and, although the spirit expressed a desire to remain longer, she retired on Mr. Luxmoore's insisting on it, and the seance terminated.

"It is not always, nor even often, that the spirit Katie is in the humor to give us information of her present and past history, such as the above, and it has occurred to me that she declines it because she has been accustomed — too much, in my opinion — to jokes, and what might be called "chaffing" from the circle, and this probably is more to the taste of a spirit who, as she has herself stated, is not by any means in a highly spiritual sphere. But this may be mere speculation on my part."

Notwithstanding the confidence of these and many other intelligent parties in the genuineness of the manifestations through Miss Cook, the phenomena were so extraordinary that doubt, even among confirmed Spiritualists, would frequently be excited. That a spirit, palpably materialized or reincarnated, could come into the presence of mortals, that she should be undistinguishable in appearance from a human being, that she should allow herself to be touched, write letters before the spectators, converse fluently and audibly, and, in fact, show all the traits of an average and somewhat petulant young woman, and then disappear at once, on reentering the cabinet, naturally awakened an amazement akin to distrust.

Although the faces of Miss Cook and Katie were much alike, it was found, on close examination, that there were marked differences, varying in degree at different times. The hair of the two was decidedly unlike; that of Miss Cook being dark, and that of the spirit of a light auburn or brown. That the hair of the latter was not false was proved by tracing it back to the scalp. This was done by Prof. Crookes, and also by Mrs. Florence Marryat Ross-Church. Specimens of the spirit hair have been subjected to the microscope, and found to be genuine hair, though rather coarse for a woman. The spirit-form was repeatedly measured and found to be, in its bare feet, taller by from two to four inches than Miss Cook. Other points of difference were noticed; but it is unnecessary to dwell upon them here, inasmuch as the distinctive individuality of Miss Cook and Katie was subsequently proved by irresistible tests.

Mr. Coleman suggested the theory that Katie was the double, or, as the Germans call it, the *doppelganger*, of the medium; but he was soon led by Professor Crookes's decisive experiments to abandon the idea.

While even among Spiritualists the element of skepticism was thus at work, an incident occurred at a seance at Mr. Luxmoore's, December 9th, 1874, which seemed to be, for the moment, a triumph of the skeptics. In violation of the conditions of the seance, Mr. Volckman rose from his seat and attempted to seize the supposed spirit. She glided from his grasp, however, and Miss Cook was soon afterwards found tied as she had been left.

This occurrence served only to confirm belief in the genuineness of the phenomena, for it drew forth testimonials from many in behalf of the reliability of the medium. Mr. Henry Dunphy, a barrister, and well known man of letters, who was present at the attempt, published in the February number of *London Society* (1874) an account, from which we quote the following :

" I was seated between Lady Caithness and Mr. Blackburn, holding a hand of each. The apparition appeared several times and came out into the centre of the room. It was arrayed in a long white dress with a double skirt, had naked feet, and wore a veil over the head and falling clown below the waist. Count de Pomar asked whether he might approach it ; and, having obtained permission, left the circle and walked straight up to it. Katie held out her hand, which he took, and subsequently returned to his seat.

" The apparition then advanced to the portion of the room farthest from the cabinet, when a person, who to me was a perfect stranger, jumped up, caught the figure round the waist, and held it, exclaiming "It is the medium!" Two or three gentlemen present rushed forward and caught him, and a struggle ensued. I watched the result with considerable interest, and observed that the figure appeared to lose its feet and legs, and to elude the grasp, making for that purpose a movement somewhat similar to that of a seal in the water. Although the person who made the attempt was apparently well able to hold on to anything he might happen to clutch, the apparition glided out of his grip, leaving no trace of corporeal existence, or surroundings in the shape of clothing."

Mr. George Henry Tapp, of the Dalston Association of Inquirers, added his testimony to that of others on this occasion, and threw light on some mooted questions. He says that the points of difference between Katie and the medium were often remarkable, not only in regard to features, but as regards height, bulk, &c. The resemblance between the two was at times hardly perceptible. When he first saw the full form of Katie she stood five feet six inches high, with her naked feet flat on the floor. She was stout and broad across the waist and shoulders, quite a contrast to her medium, who was much shorter and petite in person.

Katie has frequently stood by Mr. Tapp, and leaned against him at seances for several minutes together, permitting him to thoroughly scan her face and figure in a good light. Once

she laid her right arm in his outstretched hands, and allowed him to examine it closely. It was plump and shapely, longer than that of the medium. The hands, too, were much larger, with beautifully shaped nails, unlike those of Miss Cook, who was in the bad habit of biting her nails.

Holding the arm of Katie lightly in one hand he passed his other hand along it from the shoulder. "The skin," he says, "was beautifully— I may say, unnaturally— smooth, like wax or marble ; yet the temperature was that of the healthy human body. There was, however, no bone in the wrist. I lightly felt round the wrist again, and then told Katie that the bone was wanting. She laughed, and said, "Wait a bit," and after going about to the other sitters, came round and placed her arm in my hand as before."

This time Mr. Tapp was satisfied. Sure enough, the bone was there.

In two instances he saw Katie with long ringlets reaching to her waist, the hair being of a light brown color; while the medium's hair was cut short, and was not curled, its color being a very dark brown, almost black. Katie's eyes were sometimes a light blue color, sometimes dark brown ; and this difference was frequently noticed.

On one occasion Katie, on coming out of the cabinet, held up her right arm, which was of a dusky black color. Letting it fall by her side, and raising it again almost instantaneously, it was the usual flesh color like the other arm.

One evening Mr. Tapp made some jesting remark to Katie, when she suddenly struck him heavily in the chest with her clenched fist. He was startled, and, indeed, hurt by the unexpected blow; so much so, that he inadvertently caught hold of her right arm by the wrist.

"Her wrist," he says, "crumpled in my grasp *like a piece of paper, or thin cardboard, my fingers meeting through it.*

I let go at once, and expressed my regret that I had forgotten the conditions, fearing that harm to the medium might ensue; but Katie reassured me, saying, that as my act was not intentional, she could avert any untoward result."

In conclusion Mr. Tapp bears the fullest testimony to the good faith and integrity of Miss Cook and her family.

That some abnormal power was at work in the manifestations through Miss Cook, no intelligent investigator seems to have denied. Katie would not be gone more than forty seconds at most from the circle, when the curtain of the cabinet would be drawn, and Miss Cook would be found waking from her trance. It was manifestly a physical impossibility for her to have changed her gown, put on her boots, dressed her hair and altered the color of it, and, in addition to all this, destroyed all trace of the "spirit's" flowing white robes, in less than a minute.

The question, therefore, reduced itself to this: Does the mysterious force do all these things, after having thrust forth the entranced medium to play the part of a spirit ? What remained now to do in this investigation, was to establish still more conclusively, and by scientific tests, the separate identity of the two forms.

## CHAPTER V

Early in the year 1874, Prof. William Crookes, F. R. S., a well-known chemist, discoverer of the metal thalium, author of several esteemed scientific works, and editor of the Quarterly Journal of Science, undertook the investigation of the phenomena through Miss Cook.

In a letter dated 20, Mornington-road, London, Feb. 3d, 1874, Mr. Crookes writes: " Miss Cook is now devoting herself exclusively to a series of private seances with me and one

or two friends. The seances will probably extend over some months, and I am promised that every desirable test shall be given to me. . . . Enough has taken place to thoroughly convince me of the perfect truth and honesty of Miss Cook." "

# Several articles about Florence Cook and Katie King

[Artikel om Florence Cook av Florence Marryat på "Psychictruth.info"+ två andra artiklar](#) by among others Epes Sargent

The article [The haunted museum: The medium and the scientist. Sir William Crookes, Florence Cook and the enigmatic ghost, Katie King.](#)

[Article about Florence Cook at the homepage "Mediums and channelers"](#)

[The article "Sir William Crookes and the ghost of Katie King " on the blog "Is there life after death?"](#)

[Article about Florence Cook at "SurvivalAfterDeath.info"](#)

The article "[Florence Cook: Materializing Medium or Mendacious Fraud?](#)" by Michael Gallagher

The article "[Florence Cook and Katie King: The Story of a Spiritualist Medium](#)" by Brian Houghton

## Skeptic testimonies about Katie King och Florence Cook from Frank Podmore´s book "Modern Spiritualism: A history and a criticism"

*(this is a very superficial description, which does not touch on the huge amount of evidence available in favor of Florence Cook :)*

(p. 97-104 from Frank Podmore´s book "[Modern Spiritualism: A history and a criticism](#)", 1902:)

"But it was a new medium. Miss Florence Cook — then a girl of sixteen — who first exhibited materialisation in its full development in a good light. Miss Cook attended several of the early sittings at the rooms of Heme and Williams; and later she and Herne had some successful materialisations at Mr. Cook's house at Hackney. From this point Miss Cook, soon discarding Heme's assistance, appears to have given regular stances on her own account. At the outset Miss Cook (at the present time a professional medium under the name of Mrs. Corner) took no money for her stances; and, shortly after she had begun to give regular sittings, a wealthy citizen of Manchester, Mr. Charles Blackburn, came forward and undertook to pay her an annual retaining fee, that she might be free to give her services when required.

In this manner Miss Cook was placed in much the same position as Mrs. Guppy and other non-professional mediums. Though receiving a substantial payment for the exercise of her gifts, she was in no way beholden to the individual sitters who attended her circles. They were invited guests of herself or her family, and for the most part accepted without question the restraints imposed by that condition. The following extracts from two articles which appeared in the Daily Telegraph will show how her performances appeared to a contemporary writer.(2) After describing the medium, "a pretty Jewish-like little girl," and the other persons present, all members of the medium's family, or well-known Spiritualists,



the writer continues : —

"A sort of comer cupboard had been fitted up with two doors opening in the usual manner from the centre, and an aperture of some eighteen inches square in the fixed portion at the top. At this I was told the faces would appear. A lamp on a table in the other corner of the room was so arranged as to shed a bright light on this opening, whilst it left the rest of the small apartment in subdued, but still in full light. I examined the cupboard or cabinet

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2) Daily Telegraph, Oct. 10th, 1872, article on "Spirit Faces," by "Our Own Commissioner."

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carefully, put a chair in, and saw little Miss Blank carefully shut up inside, like a pot of jam or a pound of candles. A rope was put in her lap, the object of which will appear anon, and we all sat round like a party of grown-up children waiting for the magic-lantern.

" We were told to sing, and so we did — at least the rest did, for the songs were spiritualistic ones for the most part, which I did not know. They were pretty, cheerful little hymns, such as ' Hand in hand with Angels,' ' The Beautiful River,' and Longfellow's ' Foot-steps of Angels.' By-and-by raps inside the cupboard door told us to ' open sesame.' We did so ; and there was pretty Miss Blank tied round the neck, arms, and legs to the chair, in a very uncomfortable and apparently secure manner. We sealed the knots, shut her up in the cupboard, and warbled again. After some delay a face rose gently to the aperture rather far back, but presently came well to the front. It was slightly pale, and the head was swathed in white drapery. The eyes were fixed, and altogether it looked ghostly. It remained for some time, disappeared and reappeared ; and the lamp was turned full upon it, but the eyes never lost their fixed stare, and showed no symptom of winking. After several minutes it went altogether. The doors were opened, and little Miss Blank was found still tied, with seals unbroken, and

to all appearance in a deep sleep. . . . After a good deal more singing than I cared about, another appearance took place in obedience to the command of the doctor, who had been in the East, and asked to see a Parsee friend. After some delay, a head appeared, surmounted by a turban, and with a decidedly Eastern expression of countenance and dark complexion. It did not satisfy the doctor, who declared that the face bore a resemblance to the one demanded, but that the headgear was not en regie. This was Tableau No. 2. . . . In Scene the Third the face was quite different. The head was still surmounted by white drapery, but a black band was over the forehead, like a nun's hood. The teeth were projecting, and the expression of the face sad. They fancied it was a spirit that was pained at not being recognised. When this face disappeared, Kate came again for a little while, and allowed me to go up to the cupboard and touch her face and hand, after first putting to me the pertinent question, ' Do you squeeze ? ' On assuring her I did not do anything so improper, the manipulations were permitted. This was the finale, and the circle broke up forthwith. The gentleman from Manchester was delighted, and all the Spiritualists, of course, were loud in their commendations."

In the following year the same writer gives an account of a later phase of the manifestations : —

" In a short time, however, Katie — as the familiar of Miss B. was termed — thought she would be able to ' materialise ' herself so far as to present the whole form, if we arranged the corner cupboard so as to admit of her doing so. Accordingly we opened the door, and from it suspended a rug or two opening in the centre, after the fashion of a Bedouin Arab's tent, formed a semicircle, sat and sang Longfellow's 'Footsteps of Angels.' Therein occurs the passage, 'Then the forms of the departed enter at the open door.' And, lo and behold, though we had left Miss B. tied and sealed to her chair, and clad in an ordinary black dress somewhat voluminous as to the skirts, a tall female figure draped classically in white, with bare arms and feet, did enter at the open door, or rather down the centre from between the two rugs, and stood statuelike before us, spoke a few words, and retired; after which we entered the Bedouin tent and found pretty Miss B. with her dress as before, knots and

seals secure, and her boots on! This was Form No. 1, the first I had ever seen. It looked as material as myself ; and on a subsequent occasion — for I have seen it several times — we took four very good photographic portraits of it by magnesium light. The difficulty I still felt, with the form as with the faces, was that it seemed so thoroughly material and flesh and blood like." \*

Whilst Miss Cook was still giving her seances a new private medium came on the stage. Mrs. Showers, the widow of General Showers, was living at Teignmouth, with one daughter, Mary, who at the time when the manifestations began was sixteen years old. The attention of the family was called to the accounts of Spiritualism in London, and they began to hold nightly seances for themselves in the spring of 1872. The tables moved, messages were spelt out by the raps, and Miss Mary Showers and the servant Ellen professed to see spirits moving about the room, amongst them John King and Peter. Direct writing, at first in spiegel-schrift, followed. Then a young gentleman named H. appeared upon the scene. He came in one evening to bid farewell before starting for Australia. At his entrance the dining-room table started to run across the room by itself. Mrs. Showers tells us that, herself by this time accustomed to such marvels, she tried to divert her guest's attention by suggesting that he should dry his feet — it being a wet night — at the kitchen fire. Immediately after his departure from the room on this errand a crash was heard, and Mrs. Showers, hastening to the kitchen, found Mr. H. standing on the kitchen floor in a pool of soup. He assured her that the saucepan had jumped off the fire at his entrance. Moreover, two large dish-covers, no unusual

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\* Daily Telegraph, 12th Aug., 1873. Another account of Miss Cook's early seances will be found in Mr. Dunphy's article, " Modern Mysteries," in London Society, Feb., 1874.

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occurrence at that period, Mrs. Showers tells us, were seen to be suspended from the bell wires. From this precarious eminence they shortly descended with a crash on the china

below. Then other manifestations of the usual Poltergeist order followed. Mr. H.'s chair was snatched away from him as he attempted to sit down at table. Sofa cushions, egg-cups, flower-pots, umbrellas, pots of jam, chairs, ottomans, a roll of lard, and other things flew about the house. Scraps of paper, inscribed with doggerel rhymes, fluttered down from the ceiling. Mr. H. developed into a seeing medium, and recognised John King, in luminous robe and turban, and Peter, in a shooting coat, sitting on the sofa. Mr. H. shortly afterwards left for Australia, but the spiritual forces continued to develop. Peter now communicated with Mrs. Showers through the "direct" voice, and finally promised to show himself to her in material form, through the mediumship of Ellen, the servant. Mrs. Showers was bidden to leave the room whilst the materialisation was being prepared ;

"As I turned from the door," she writes, "the blended voices of Peter and Ada swelled out into a harmony so mournful and sublime, that the tears involuntarily started into my eyes. ' Oh, my God ! ' I exclaimed, clasping my hands, ' is it possible that these things are true, and that the majority of mankind are living in utter ignorance of them?' Hardly knowing where I went, I walked up and down the garden path in company with Lion, who carefully measured his pace with my own, in evident consciousness of my abstracted mood, until the now solemn and almost terrible voice of Peter called to me from above : ' Come up, but turn away your eyes at first from the aperture ; stand at the further end of the room and only approach gradually, as I tell you.'

" I did as Peter directed, and soon perceived the living, animated countenance of a young man, clad in a dark, flowing mantle, standing at the aperture a few feet from me. He had a long, dark moustache, and his face was rounder and fuller, but the resemblance to Ellen was nevertheless plainly discernible. My daughter, however, assured me that Ellen was at that moment lying back insensible in her chair."

At the termination of the sitting Peter prescribed some good wine and other delicacies for the medium's supper.\*

Shortly after the publication of Mrs. Showers' account of her daughter's mediumship at the end of 1873, the two ladies

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\* Spiritualist, 1874, p. 43. The two previous letters from Mrs. Showers, on which the account in the text is based, will be found in the same paper, 1873, p. 487, and 1874, p. 30.

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came up to London to give stances to many representative Spiritualists. At first, indeed, the manifestations went no further than the presentation, in a mildly subdued light, at an opening between the curtains of the cabinet, of a face admitted by Spiritualists themselves to bear a strong resemblance to the face of the medium. The test commonly employed at these early stances to guard against impersonation by the medium had been devised apparently under direct spirit instruction. By the side of the medium would be placed, at the beginning of the stance, in the cabinet or curtained recess, a sufficient quantity of rope or tape for Peter's use. At a signal from within the curtain would be drawn aside, and the medium discovered apparently entranced, and straitly bound by that dexterous fiend. Some of the company would then impress their seals upon the knots, and the curtains would again be drawn.\*

When by means of this and similar tests the honesty of the medium was held to be sufficiently vindicated, all precautions were at some of the later seances dispensed with, to permit of the " spirit " appearing in full form before the spectators. The following account of one of the earliest of these full-form manifestations is taken from a letter written by Dr. Richardson to the Medium and Daybreak : — (1)

" At a private seance held at Mrs. Showers's residence, March 19th, we were favoured with the appearance of the full form of the spirit calling herself ' Florence Maple.' I requested ' Peter,' the spiritual

stage-manager, to allow me to employ what I had been impressed would be a good test for the readers of these notes, viz. to make a mark with chalk or charcoal on the face of the medium before entrancement. This was declined on the alleged ground that the mark might reappear on some part of the created spirit form, and he could not say which part. This I knew to accord with reported experiences, and was impossible to be denied. Being fully satisfied of the reality of former manifestations, all present decided to dispense with the tests of tying and sealing. After the usual lapse of time, occupied, as we were told, by entrancement, 'Florence' appeared holding aside the curtain. She was robed from head to foot in white ; her head-dress was, as before, net or tulle ; her bodice, sleeves, and skirt were of soft material, described by the ladies as resembling merino, by 'Florence' as being cashmere. She wore white pearl buttons in place, she said, of gold, which she was unable to procure. We all noticed the extreme pallor of her features, the open, staring, never-winking eyes. There was not so great a resemblance to the medium as formerly. She asked to

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\*See the accounts of these early stances given in the *Spiritualist* , 1874, pp. II, 74, 108, etc.

(1) April 3rd, 1874.

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examine our rings and jewellery, and expressed herself much gratified at being allowed to handle them. Miss Florence Cook was present, and was permitted to look into the curtained recess. She stated that she saw at the same time 'Florence' the spirit, the medium lying back in her chair, and a third form dressed in a grey jacket as a man. Her viewing the group was attended by no ill consequences either to the spirits or the mortals, and demonstrates that much of the fear on this ground is needless. The spirit 'Florence' kissed the human Florence, and shook hands with all of us. She appeared at times uneasy about the light, which was a lamp on the mantelpiece, burning dimly, and objected to being scrutinised too closely. The wonderful mediumship of Miss Showers was displayed by the disregard of usual rules : we walked about the room, and Mrs. Showers absolutely left the room and admitted the

servant while ' Florence ' was in full view. She evinced some little nervousness on the entrance of the servant, exclaiming, ' I do not know her.' I noted the height of ' Florence,' and found it to vary. At one time she stood six to eight inches taller (by subsequent measurement) than the medium, while at another she shrunk in proportion while under observation. I asked if she had bones. She replied, ' Yes ' ; and on retiring behind the curtain, we heard certain noises resembling the cracking of joints. Of course, I should have liked to have examined her anatomically, but was met with a cold refusal even when I asked her to put out her tongue and to let me feel her pulse. After a conversation extending over half an hour she asked if we were gratified, and on being assured that we were, she replied, ' Then we are repaid ; God bless you all.'

"W. LINDESAY Richardson, M.D.

"March 20th, 1874."

It will be seen that at these early form manifestations practically no precautions were taken against trickery. There was nothing, so far as can be discovered, to throw any hindrance in the way of the medium if she chose to impersonate the spirit by exhibiting a mask through the opening of the curtain, or by dressing herself up and walking about the room. Nor were there any collateral circumstances to justify belief in the genuineness of the manifestations.

That an imposture so naive and so flagrant should have escaped detection for so long in itself requires explanation. That explanation is, no doubt, to be found in the peculiar conditions of the exhibition. The two principal performers were, as we have seen, young girls, little more than children in years, and one of them at least possessed of considerable personal attractions. The performances were given either in a private house in presence of members of the medium's own family, or in the house of some tried and trusted Spiritualist

The spectators, carefully selected for the purpose, were all present in the quality of favoured guests, and chivalry and

good manners joined in imposing restraints upon the legitimate satisfaction of scientific curiosity. These restraints were not, indeed, always effectual. At a dark seance with Miss Cook one William Hipp seized the hand of the " spirit " which was sprinkling him with water, and, when a light was struck, found himself firmly grasping the hand of the medium. Miss Cook's explanation, that she had instinctively stretched her hand across the table to recover a flower which had been removed by the spirits from her dress, appears to have given satisfaction to her friends.\*

On December 9th, 1873, a stance was held at Mr. Cook's house, amongst the persons present being the Earl and Countess of Caithness and the lady's son, the Count (afterwards Duke) de Medina Pomar. One of the invited guests was Mr. W. Volckman, invited, as he subsequently explained, after nine months' importunity, only when, in accordance with a hint received from Mr. Cook, he had presented the youthful medium with a present of jewellery.(1) Mr. Volckman, " having for forty minutes carefully observed and scrutinised the form, features, gestures, size, style, and peculiarities of utterance of the so-called spirit," and having " perceived also an occasional tiptoeing by the young lady as if to alter her stature," became convinced that the " spirit " was no ghost, but Miss Florence Cook herself. He therefore rushed forward and seized first the hand and then the waist of the white-robed figure. Two of the medium's friends at once jumped up and forcibly extricated the form from Mr. Volckman's grasp ; the gas was extinguished ; " Katie " retreated to the cabinet ; and " after a delay of about five minutes . . . the cabinet was opened, and Miss Cook found in black dress and boots with the tape tightly round her waist as at the beginning of the stance, the knot sealed as at first with the signet ring of the Earl of Caithness." Subsequently the medium was searched, and no white drapery was found on her.(2)

The editor of the Medium alone blamed the conduct of those who had endeavoured to stifle investigation. But most



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\*See letter in *Echo*, Jan. 3rd, 1874, and letter by Thomas Blyton in the *Spiritualist*, Jan. 16th, 1874.

(1)Mr. Volckman's letter to the *Medium* and *Daybreak*, Jan. 23rd, 1874.

(2)See the *Spiritualist*, Dec, 1873, and *Medium*, Jan., 1874. Another of those present, Mr. Dunphy, in describing the struggle between the "spirit" and Mr. Volckman, writes that "the figure appeared to lose its feet and legs and to elude the grasp, making for that purpose a movement somewhat similar to that of a seal in water" {*London Society*, Feb., 1874).

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Spiritualists reserved their indignation for Mr. Volckman, and were no whit shaken in their belief in the genuineness of Miss Cook's mediumship. Indirectly the Spiritualist position was, indeed, considerably strengthened, as the incident was the immediate occasion of the publication in the *Spiritualist* journals of three letters from Sir William Crookes, giving an account of his own experiences with the same medium.\*"

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\* See below, chap. ix.

# Four pictures of Katie King

1. [Katie King is examined by Dr. J. Gully of the Royal College of Surgeons](#)
2. [The physically solid Katie King places her arm on a sitter's shoulder](#)
3. [Katie King stands in full view of the flashlight camera](#)
4. [Crookes and King stand arm-in-arm in full view of the cameras](#)

## "My Spirit Child" by Florence Marryat, the eighth chapter in the book "There is no Death"

"THE SAME year that John Powles died, 1860, I passed through the greatest trouble of my life. It is quite unnecessary to my narrative to relate what that trouble was, nor how it affected me, but I suffered terribly both in mind and body, and it was chiefly for this reason that the medical men advised my return to England, which I reached on the 14th of December, and on the 30th of the same month a daughter was born to me, who survived her birth for only ten days. The child was born with a most peculiar blemish, which it is necessary for the purpose of my argument to describe. On the left side of the upper lip was a mark as though a semicircular piece of flesh had been cut out by a bullet-mould, which exposed part of the gum. The swallow also had been submerged into the gullet, so that she had for the short period of her earthly existence to be fed by artificial means, and the jaw itself had been so twisted that could she have lived to cut her teeth, the double ones would have been in front. This blemish was considered to be of so remarkable a type that Dr. Frederick Butler of Winchester, who attended me, invited several other medical men from Southampton and other places, to examine the infant with him, and they all agreed that a similar case had never come under their notice before. This is a very important factor in my narrative. I was closely catechized as to whether I had suffered any physical or mental shock, that should account for the injury to my child, and it was decided that the trouble I had experienced was sufficient to produce it. The case, under feigned names, was fully reported in the *Lancet* as something quite out of the common way. My little child, who was baptized by the name of "Florence," lingered until the 10th of January, 1861, and then passed quietly away, and when my first natural disappointment was over I ceased to think of her except as of something which "might have been," but never would be again. In this world of misery, the loss of an infant is soon swallowed up in more active trouble. Still I never quite forgot my poor baby, perhaps because at that time she was happily the "one dead lamb" of my little flock. In recounting the events of my first séance with Mrs. Holmes, I have mentioned how a young girl much muffled up about the mouth and chin appeared, and intimated that she came for me, although I could not recognize her. I was so ignorant of the life beyond

the grave at that period, that it never struck me that the baby who had left me at ten days old had been growing since our separation, until she had reached the age of ten years.

The first séance made such an impression on my mind that two nights afterwards I again presented myself (this time alone) at Mrs. Holmes' rooms to attend another. It was a very different circle on the second occasion. There were about thirty people present, all strangers to each other, and the manifestations were proportionately ordinary. Another professional medium, a Mrs. Davenport, was present, as one of her controls, whom she called "Bell," had promised, if possible, to show her face to her. As soon, therefore, as the first spirit face appeared (which was that of the same little girl that I had seen before), Mrs. Davenport exclaimed, "There, 'Bell ... Why!" I said, "that's the little nun we saw on Monday." "O! no! that's my 'Bell'," persisted Mrs. Davenport. But Mrs. Holmes took my side, and was positive the spirit came for me. She told me she had been trying to communicate with her since the previous séance. "I know she is nearly connected with you," she said. "Have you never lost a relation of her age?" "Never!" I replied; and at that declaration the little spirit moved away, sorrowfully as before.

A few weeks after I received an invitation from Mr. Henry Dunphy (the gentleman who had introduced me to Mrs. Holmes) to attend a private séance given at his own house in Upper Gloucester Place, by the well-known medium Florence Cook. The double drawing-rooms were divided by velvet curtains, behind which Miss Cook was seated in an armchair, the curtains being pinned together half-way up, leaving a large aperture in the shape of a V. Being a complete stranger to Miss Cook, I was surprised to hear the voice of her control direct that I should stand by the curtains and hold the lower parts together whilst the forms appeared above, lest the pins should give way, and necessarily from my position I could hear every word that passed between Miss Cook and her guide. The first face that showed itself was that of a man unknown to me; then ensued a kind of frightened colloquy between the medium and her control. "Take it away. Go away! I don't like you. Don't touch me - you frighten me! Go away!" I heard Miss Cook exclaim, and then her guide's voice interposed itself, "Don't be silly, Florrie. Don't be unkind. It won't hurt you," etc., and immediately afterwards the same little girl I had seen at Mrs. Holmes' rose to view at the aperture of the curtains, muffled up as before, but smiling with her eyes at me. I directed the attention of the company to her, calling her again "my little

nun," I was surprised, however, at the evident distaste Miss Cook had displayed towards the spirit, and when the séance was concluded and she had regained her normal condition, I asked her if she could recall the faces she saw under trance. "Sometimes," she replied. I told her of the "little nun," and demanded the reason of her apparent dread of her. "I can hardly tell you," said Miss Cook; "I don't know anything about her. She is quite a stranger to me, but her face is not fully developed, I think. There is something wrong about her mouth. She frightens me.

This remark, though made with the utmost carelessness, set me thinking, and after I had returned home, I wrote to Miss Cook, asking her to inquire of her guides who the little spirit was.

She replied as follows:

"Dear Mrs. Ross-Church, I have asked Katie King, but she cannot tell me anything further about the spirit that came through me the other evening than that she is a young girl closely connected with yourself."

I was not, however, yet convinced of the spirit's identity, although John Powles constantly assured me that it was my child. I tried hard to communicate with her at home, but without success. I find in the memoranda I kept of our private séances at that period several messages from Powles referring to Florence.

In one he says, "Your child's want of power to communicate with you is not because she is too pure, but because she is too weak. She will speak to you some day. She is not in heaven."

This last assertion, knowing so little as I did of a future state, both puzzled and grieved me. I could not believe that an innocent infant was not in the Beatific Presence - yet I could not understand what motive my friend could have in leading me astray. I had yet to learn that once received into Heaven no spirit could return to earth, and that a spirit may have a training to undergo, even though it has never committed a mortal sin. A further proof, however, that my dead child had never died was to reach me from a quarter where I least expected it. I was editor of the magazine *London Society* at that time, and amongst my contributors was Dr. Keningale Cook, who had married Mabel Collins, the now well-known writer of spiritualistic novels. One day Dr. Cook brought me an invitation from his wife (whom I had never met) to spend Saturday to Monday with them in their cot-

tage at Redhill, and I accepted it, knowing nothing of the proclivities of either of them, and they knowing as little of my private history as I did of theirs. And I must take this opportunity to observe that, at this period, I had never made my lost child the subject of conversation even with my most intimate friends. The memory of her life and death, and the troubles that caused it, was not a happy one, and of no interest to any but myself. So little, therefore, had it been discussed amongst us that until Florence reappeared to revive the topic, my elder children were ignorant that their sister had been marked in any way differently from themselves. It may, therefore, be supposed how unlikely it was that utter strangers and public media should have gained any inkling of the matter. I went down to Redhill, and as I was sitting with the Keningale Cooks after dinner, the subject of Spiritualism came on the tapis, and I was informed that the wife was a powerful trance medium, which much interested me, as I had not, at that period, had any experience of her particular class of mediumship. In the evening we "sat" together, and Mrs. Cook having become entranced, her husband took shorthand notes of her utterances. Several old friends of their family spoke through her, and I was listening to them in the listless manner in which we hear the conversation of strangers, when my attention was aroused by the medium suddenly leaving her seat, and falling on her knees before me, kissing my hands and face, and sobbing violently the while. I waited in expectation of hearing who this might be, when the manifestations as suddenly ceased, the medium returned to her seat, and the voice of one of her guides said that the spirit was unable to speak through excess of emotion, but would try again later in the evening. I had almost forgotten the circumstances in listening to other communications, when I was startled by hearing the word "Mother!" sighed rather than spoken. I was about to make some excited reply, when the medium raised her hand to enjoin silence, and the following communication was taken down by Mr. Cook as she pronounced the words. The sentences in parentheses are my replies to her.

"Mother! I am Florence. I must be very quiet. I want to feel I have a mother still. I am so lonely. Why should I be so? I cannot speak well. I want to be like one of you. I want to feel I have a

mother and sisters. I am so far away from you all now.

("But I always think of you, my dear dead baby.")

"That's just it - your baby. But I'm not a baby now. I shall get nearer. They tell me I shall. I do not know if I can come when you are alone. It's all so dark. I know you are there, but so dimly. I've grown all by myself. I'm not really unhappy, but I want to get nearer you. I know you think of me, but you think of me as a baby. You don't know me as I am. You've seen me, because in my love I have forced myself upon you. I've not been amongst the flowers yet, but I shall be, very soon now; but I want my mother to take me there. All has been given me that can be given me, but I cannot receive it, except in so far-" Here she seemed unable to express herself.

("Did the trouble I had before your birth affect your spirit, Florence?")

"Only as things cause each other. I was with you, Mother, all through that trouble. I should be nearer to you, than any child you have, if I could only get close to you."

("I can't bear to hear you speak so sadly, dear. I have always believed that you, at least, were happy in Heaven.")

"I am not in Heaven! But there will come a day, Mother - I can laugh when I say it - when we shall go to Heaven together and pick blue flowers - blue flowers. They are so good to me here, but if your eye cannot bear the daylight you cannot see the buttercups and daisies."

I did not learn till afterwards that in the spiritual language blue flowers are typical of happiness. The next question I asked her was if she thought she could write through me. "I don't seem able to write through you, but why, I know not."

("Do you know your sisters, Eva and Ethel?")

"No! no! in a weary voice. "The link of sisterhood is only through the mother. That kind of sisterhood does not last, because there is a higher."

("Do you ever see your father?")

"No! he is far, far away. I went once, not more. Mother dear, he'll love me when he comes here. They've told me so, and they always tell truth here! I am but a child, yet not so very little. I seem composed of two things - a child in ignorance and a woman in years. Why can't I speak at other places? I have

wished and tried! I've come very near, but it seems so easy to speak now. This medium seems so different."

("I wish you could come to me when I am alone, Florence.")

"You shall know me! I will come, Mother dear. I shall always be able to come here. I do come to you., but not in the same way."

She spoke in such a plaintive, melancholy voice that Mrs. Cook, thinking she would depress my spirits, said, "Don't make your state out to be sadder than it really is." Her reply was very remarkable.

"I am, as I am! Friend! when you come here, if you find that sadness is, you will not be able to alter it by plunging into material pleasures. Our sadness makes the world we live in. It is not deeds that make us wrong. It is the state in which we were born. Mother! you say I died sinless. That is nothing. I was born in a state. Had I lived, I should have caused you more pain than you can know. I am better here. I was not fit to battle with the world, and they took me from it. Mother! you won't let this make you sad. You must not."

("What can I do to bring you nearer to me?")

"I don't know what will bring me nearer, but I'm helped already by just talking to you. There's a ladder of brightness every step. I believe I've gained just one step now. O! the Divine teachings are so mysterious. Mother! does it seem strange to you to hear your 'baby' say things as if she knew them? I'm going now. Good-bye!"

And so Florence went. The next voice that spoke was that of a guide of the medium, and I asked her for a personal description of my daughter as she then appeared. She replied, "Her face is downcast. We have tried to cheer her, but she is very sad. It is the state in which she was born. Every physical deformity is the mark of a condition. A weak body is not necessarily the mark of a weak spirit, but the prison of it, because the spirit might be too passionate otherwise. You cannot judge in what way the mind is deformed because the body is deformed. It does not follow that a canker in the body is a canker in the mind. But the mind may be too exuberant - may need a canker to restrain it."

I have copied this conversation, word for word, from the short-



hand notes taken at the time of utterance; and when it is remembered that neither Mrs. Keningale Cook nor her husband knew that I had lost a child - that they had never been in my house nor associated with any of my friends - it will at least be acknowledged, even by the most sceptical, that it was a very remarkable coincidence that I should receive such a communication from the lips of a perfect stranger. Only once after this did Florence communicate with me through the same source. She found congenial media nearer home, and naturally availed herself of them. But the second occasion was almost more convincing than the first. I went one afternoon to consult my solicitor in the strictest confidence as to how I should act under some very painful circumstances, and he gave me his advice. The next morning as I sat at breakfast, Mrs. Cook, who was still living at Redhill, ran into my room with an apology for the uncereemoniousness of her visit, on the score that she had received a message for me the night before which Florence had begged her to deliver without delay. The message was to this effect: "Tell my mother that I was with her this afternoon at the lawyer's, and she is not to follow the advice given her, as it will do harm instead of good." Mrs. Cook added, "I don't know to what Florence alludes, of course, but I thought it best, as I was coming to town, to let you know at once."

The force of this anecdote does not lie in the context. The mystery is contained in the fact of a secret interview having been overheard and commented upon. But the truth is, that having greater confidence in the counsel of my visible guide than in that of my invisible one, I abided by the former, and regretted it ever afterwards.

The first conversation I held with Florence had a great effect upon me. I knew before that my uncontrolled grief had been the cause of the untimely death of her body, but it had never struck me that her spirit would carry the effects of it into the unseen world. It was a warning to me (as it should be to all mothers) not to take the solemn responsibility of maternity upon themselves without being prepared to sacrifice their own feelings for the sake of their children. Florence assured me, however, that communion with myself in my improved condition of happiness

would soon lift her spirit from its state of depression and consequently I seized every opportunity of seeing and speaking with her.

During the succeeding twelve months I attended numerous séances with various media, and my spirit child (as she called herself) never failed to manifest through the influence of any one of them, though, of course, in different ways. Through some she touched me only, and always with an infant's hand, that I might recognize it as hers, or laid her mouth against mine that I might feel the scar upon her lips; through others she spoke, or wrote, or showed her face, but I never attended a séance at which she omitted to notify her presence. Once at a dark circle, held with Mr. Charles Williams, after having had my dress and that of my next neighbour, Lady Archibald Campbell, pulled several times, as if to attract our attention, the darkness opened before us, and there stood my child, smiling at us like a happy dream, her fair hair waving about her temples, and her blue eyes fixed on me. She was clothed in white, but we saw no more than her head and bust, about which her hands held her drapery. Lady Archibald Campbell saw her as plainly as I did. On another occasion Mr. William Eglinton proposed to me to try and procure the spirit-writing on his arm. He directed me to go into another room and write the name of the friend I loved best in the spirit world upon a scrap of paper, which I was to twist up tightly and take back to him. I did so, writing the name of "John Powles." When I returned to Mr. Eglinton, he bared his arm, and holding the paper to the candle till it was reduced to tinder, rubbed his flesh with the ashes. I know what was expected to ensue. The name written on the paper was to reappear in red or white letters on the medium's arm. The sceptic would say it was a trick of thought-reading, and that, the medium knowing what I had written, had prepared the writing during my absence. But to his surprise and mine, when, at last he shook the ashes from his arm, we read, written in a bold, clear hand, the words - "Florence is the dearest," as though my spirit child had given me a gentle rebuke for writing any name but her own. It seems curious to me now to look back and remember how melancholy she used to be when she first came back to me, for as soon as she had established an unbroken communication between us, she developed into the

merriest little spirit I have ever known, and though her childhood has now passed away, and she is more dignified and thoughtful and womanly, she always appears joyous and happy. She has manifested largely to me through the mediumship of Mr. Arthur Colman. I had known her during a dark séance with a very small private circle (the medium being securely held and fastened the while) run about the room, like the child she was, and speak to and kiss each sitter in turn, pulling off the sofa and chair covers and piling them up in the middle of the table, and changing the ornaments of everyone present-placing the gentlemen's neckties round the throats of the ladies, and hanging the ladies' earrings in the buttonholes of the gentlemen's coats - just as she might have done had she been still with us, a happy, petted child, on earth. I have known her come in the dark and sit on my lap and kiss my face and hands, and let me feel the defect in her mouth with my own. One bright evening on the 9th of July - my birthday - Arthur Colman walked in quite unexpectedly to pay me a visit, and as I had some friends with me, we agreed to have a séance. It was impossible to make the room dark, as the windows were only shaded by venetian blinds, but we lowered them, and sat in the twilight. The first thing we heard was the voice of Florence whispering, "A present for dear Mother's birthday," when something was put into my hand. Then she crossed to the side of a lady present and dropped something into her hand, saying, "And a present for dear Mother's friend!" I knew at once by the feel of it that what Florence had given me was a chaplet of beads, and knowing how often, under similar circumstances, articles are merely carried about a room, I concluded it was one which lay upon my drawing-room mantelpiece, and said as much. I was answered by the voice of "Aimee", the medium's nearest control.

"You are mistaken," she said, "Florence has given you a chaplet you have never seen before. She was exceedingly anxious to give you a present on your birthday, so I gave her the beads which were buried with me. They came from my coffin. I held them in my hand. All I ask is that you will not show them to Arthur until I give you leave. He is not well at present, and the sight of them will upset him."

I was greatly astonished, but, of course, I followed her instructions, and when I had an opportunity to examine the beads, I found that they really were strangers to me, and had not been in the house before. The present my lady friend had received was a large, unset topaz. The chaplet was made of carved wood and steel. It was not till months had elapsed that I was given permission to show it to Arthur Colman. He immediately recognized it as the one he had himself placed in the hands of "Aimee" as she lay in her coffin, and when I saw how the sight affected him, I regretted I had told him anything about it. I offered to give the beads up to him, but he refused to receive them, and they remain in my possession to this day.

But the great climax that was to prove beyond all question the personal identity of the spirit who communicated with me, with the body I had brought into the world, was yet to come. Mr. William Harrison, the editor of the *Spiritualist* (who, after seventeen years' patient research into the science of Spiritualism, had never received a personal proof of the return of his own friends, or relations) wrote me word that he had received a message from his lately deceased friend, Mrs. Stewart, to the effect that if he would sit with the medium Florence Cook, and one or two harmonious companions, she would do her best to appear to him in her earthly likeness and afford him the test he had so long sought after. Mr. Harrison asked me, therefore, if I would join him and Miss Kidlingbury - the secretary to the British National Association of Spiritualists - in holding a séance with Miss Cook, to which I agreed, and we met in one of the rooms of the Association for that purpose. It was a very small room, about 8 feet by 16 feet, was uncarpeted and contained no furniture, so we carried in three cane-bottomed chairs for our accommodation. Across one corner of the room, about four feet from the floor, we nailed an old black shawl, and placed a cushion behind it for Miss Cook to lean her head against. Miss Florence Cook, who is a brunette, of a small, slight figure, with dark eyes and hair which she wore in a profusion of curls, was dressed in light grey merino, ornamented with crimson ribbons. She informed me previous to sitting, that she had become restless during her trances lately, and in the habit of walking out amongst the circle, and she asked me as a friend (for such we had by that

time become) to scold her well should such a thing occur, and order her to go back into the cabinet as if she were "a child or a dog and I promised her I would do so. After Florence Cook had sat down on the floor, behind the black shawl (which left her grey merino skirt exposed), and laid her head against the cushion, we lowered the gas a little, and took our seats on the three cane chairs. The medium appeared very uneasy at first, and we heard her remonstrating with the influences for using her so roughly. In a few minutes, however, there was a tremulous movement of the black shawl, and a large white hand was several times thrust into view and withdrawn again. I had never seen Mrs. Stewart (for whom we were expressly sitting) in this life, and could not, therefore, recognize the hand; but we all remarked how large and white it was. In another minute the shawl was lifted up, and a female figure crawled on its hands and knees from behind it, and then stood UP and regarded us. It was impossible, in the dim light and at the distance she stood from us, to identify the features, so Mr. Harrison asked if she were Mrs. Stewart. The figure shook its head. I had lost a sister a few months previously, and the thought flashed across me that it might be her. "Is it you, Emily?" I asked; but the head was still shaken to express a negative, and a similar question on the part of Miss Kidlingbury, with respect to a friend of her own, met with the same response. "Who can it be?" I remarked curiously to Mr. Harrison.

"Mother! don't you know me?" sounded in Florence's whispering voice. I started up to approach her exclaiming, "O! my darling child! I never thought I should meet you here!" But she said, "Go back to your chair, and I will come to you?" I reseated myself, and Florence crossed the room and sat down on my lap. She was more unclothed on that occasion than any materialized spirit I have ever seen. She wore nothing on her head, only her hair, of which she appears to have an immense quantity, fell down her back and covered her shoulders. Her arms were bare and her feet part of her legs, and the dress she wore had no shape, but seemed like so many yards of soft thick muslin, wound round her body from the bosom to below the knees. She was a heavy weight - perhaps ten stone - and had well covered limbs. In fact, she was then, and has appeared for several

years past, to be, in point of size and shape, so like her oldest sister Eva, that I always observe the resemblance between them. This séance took place at a period when Florence must have been about seventeen years old.

"Florence, my darling," I said, "is this really you" "Turn the gas," she answered, "and look at my mouth." Mr. Harrison did as she desired, and we all saw distinctly that peculiar defect on the lip with which she was born - a defect, be remembered, which some of the most experienced members the profession had affirmed to be "so rare as never to have fallen under their notice before." She also opened her mouth that I might see she had no gullet. I promised at the commencement of my book to confine myself to facts, and leave the deductions to be drawn from them to my readers, so I will not interrupt my narrative to make any remarks upon this controvertible proof of identity. I know it struck me dumb, and melted me into tears. At this juncture Miss Cook, who had been moaning and moving about a good deal behind black shawl, suddenly exclaimed, "I can't stand this any longer," and walked out into the room. There she stood in her dress and crimson ribbons whilst Florence sat on my lap in white drapery. But only for a moment, for directly the medium, was fully in view, the spirit sprung up and darted behind the curtain. Recalling Miss Cook's injunctions to me, I scolded her heartily for leaving her seat, until she crept back, whimpering, to her former position. The shawl had scarcely closed behind her before Florence reappeared and clung to me saying, "Don't let her do that again. She frightens me so." She was actually trembling all over. "Why, Florence," I replied, "do you mean to tell me you are frightened of your medium? In this world it is we poor mortals who are frightened of the spirits." "I am afraid she will send me away, Mother," she whispered. However, Miss Cook did not disturb us again, and Florence stayed with us for some time longer. She clasped her arms round my neck, and laid her head upon my bosom, and kissed me dozens of times. She took my hand and spread it out, and said she felt sure I should recognize her hand when she thrust it outside the curtain, because it was so much like my own. I was suffering much trouble at that time, and Florence told me the reason God had permitted her to show herself to me in her earthly deformity

was so that I might be sure that she was herself, and that Spirituality was a truth to comfort me. "Sometimes you doubt, Mother," she said, "and think your eyes and ears have misled you; but after this you must never doubt again. Don't fancy I am like this in the spirit land. The blemish left me long ago. But I put it on tonight to make you certain. Don't fret, dear Mother. Remember I am always near you. No one can take me away. Your earthly children may grow up and go out into the world and leave you, but you will always have your spirit child close to you." I did not, and cannot, calculate for how long Florence remained visible on that occasion. Mr. Harrison told me afterwards that she had remained for nearly twenty minutes. But her undoubted presence was such a stupendous fact to me, that I could only think that she was there-that I actually held in my arms the tiny infant I had laid with my own hands in her coffin - that she was no more dead than I was myself, but had grown to be a woman. So I sat, with my arms tight round her, and my heart beating against hers, until the power decreased, and Florence was compelled to give me a last kiss and leave me stupefied and bewildered by what had so unexpectedly occurred. Two other spirits materialized and appeared after she had left us, but as neither of them was Mrs. Stewart, the séance, as far as Mr. Harrison was concerned, was a failure. I have seen and heard Florence on numerous occasions since the one I have narrated, but not with the mark upon her mouth, which she assures me will never trouble either of us again. I could fill pages with accounts of her pretty, caressing ways and her affectionate and sometimes solemn messages; but I have told as much of her story as will interest the general reader. It has been wonderful to me to mark how her ways and mode of communication have changed with the passing years. It was a simple child who did not know how to express itself that appeared to me in 1873. It is a woman full of counsel and tender warning that comes to me in 1890. But yet she is only nineteen. When she reached that age, Florence told me she should never grow any older in years or appearance, and that she had reached the climax of womanly perfection in the spirit world. Only tonight--the night before Christmas Day - as I write her story, she comes to me and says, "Mother! you must not give way to sad thoughts. The Past is

past. Let it be buried in the blessings that remain to you."  
And amongst the greatest of those blessings I reckon my belief  
in the existence of my spirit-child."



## The article "Independent Testimony as to the Mediumship of Florence Cook" by Arthur Conan Doyle

THE MOST connected account of the mediumship of Miss Florence Cook, apart from that of Professor Crookes, is to be found in Miss Florence Marryat's "There is No Death," a most interesting book of practical experiences, which is now published in a very cheap edition (Rider & Co.). From it I make the following extracts. Miss Marryat, it should be added, was an excellent witness, all of whose statements have stood the test of time. At the time when Miss Marryat (Mrs. Ross-Church) met the medium, the latter had become Mrs. Elgie Corner.

"The first time," she writes, "that I ever met Florence Cook was in Mr. Dunphy's private house, when my little daughter appeared through her.

"On that occasion, as we were sitting at supper after the séance - a party of perhaps thirty people the whole dinner-table, with everything upon it, rose bodily in the air to a level with our knees, and the dishes and glasses swayed about in a perilous manner, without, however, coming to any permanent harm. I was so much astonished at, and interested by, what I saw that evening that I became most anxious to make the personal acquaintance of Miss Cook. She was the medium for the celebrated spirit, 'Katie King,' of whom so much has been believed and disbelieved, and the seances she gave at her parents' house in Hackney for the purpose of seeing this figure alone, used to be crowded by the cleverest and most scientific men of the day. Serjeants Cox and Ballantyne, Mr. S. C. Hall, Mr. Crookes, and many others being on terms of the greatest intimacy with her. Mr. Willia Harrison, of the 'Spiritualist' paper, was the one to procure me an introduction to the family and an entrance to the séances, for which I shall always feel grateful to him.

"The order of these séances was always the same. Miss Cook retired to a back room, divided from the audience by a thin damask curtain, and presently the form of 'Katie King' would appear dressed in white and walk out amongst the sitters in gaslight, and talk like one of themselves. Florence Cook, as I mentioned

before, is a very small, slight brunette, with dark eyes and dark curly hair, and a delicate aquiline nose. Sometimes 'Katie' resembled her exactly; at others, she was totally different. Sometimes, too, she measured the same height as her medium; at others she was much taller. I have a large photograph of 'Katie' taken under limelight. In it she appears as the double of Florrie Cook, yet Florrie was looking on whilst the picture was taken. I have sat for her several times with Mr. Crookes, and seen the tests applied which are mentioned in his book on the subject. I have seen Florrie's dark curls nailed down to the floor outside the curtain, in view of the audience, whilst 'Katie' walked about and talked with us. I have seen Florrie placed on the scale of a weighing-machine constructed by Mr. Crookes for the purpose, behind the curtain, whilst the balance remained in sight. I have seen under these circumstances that the medium weighed eight stone in a normal condition, and that as soon as the materialised form was fully developed, the balance ran up to four stone. Moreover, I have seen both Florrie and 'Katie' together on several occasions, so I can have no doubt on the subject that they were two separate creatures. Still, I can quite understand how difficult it must have been for strangers to compare the strong likeness that existed between the medium and the spirit, without suspecting that they were one and the same person. One evening 'Katie' walked out and perched herself upon my knee. I could feel she was a much plumper and heavier woman than Miss Cook, but she wonderfully resembled her in features, and I told her so. 'Katie' did not seem to consider it a compliment. She shrugged her shoulders, made a grimace, and said, 'I know I am; I can't help it, but I was much prettier than that in earth life. You shall see some day - you shall see.' After she had finally retired that evening she put her head out at the curtain again, and said, with the strong lisp she always had, 'I want Mrs. Ross-Church.' "I rose and went to her, when she pulled me inside the curtain, when I found it was so thin that the gas shining through it from the outer room made everything in the inner quite visible. 'Katie' pulled my dress impatiently, and said, 'Sit down on the ground,' which I did. She then seated herself in my lap, saying, 'And now, dear, we'll have a good 'confab,' like women do on earth.' Florence Cook, meanwhile, was lying on a mattress on the

ground close to us, wrapped in a deep trance. 'Katie' seemed very anxious I should ascertain beyond doubt that it was Florrie. 'Touch her,' she said. 'Take her hand, pull her curls. Do you see that it is Florrie lying there?' When I assured her I was quite satisfied there was no doubt of it, the spirit said, 'Then look round this way, and see what I was like in earth life.' I turned to the form in my arms, and what was my amazement to see a woman fair as the day, with large grey or blue eyes, a white skin and a profusion of golden red hair. 'Katie' enjoyed my surprise, and asked me, 'Ain't I prettier than Florrie now?' She then rose and procured a pair of scissors from the table and cut off a lock of her own hair and a lock of the medium's, and gave them to me. I have them safe to this day. One is almost black, soft and silky; the other coarse golden red. After she had made me this present, 'Katie,' said, 'Go back now, but don't tell the others to-night, or they'll all want to see me.' On another very warm evening she sat on my lap amongst the audience, and I felt perspiration on her arm. This surprised me, and I asked her if, for the time being, she had the veins, nerves and secretions of a human being; if blood ran through her body and she had a heart and lungs. Her answer was, 'I have everything that Florrie has.'

"On that occasion also she called me after her into the back room, and, dropping her white garment, stood perfectly naked before me. 'Now,' she said, 'you can see that I am a woman.' Which, indeed, she was, and a most beautifully-made woman, too, and I examined her well, whilst Miss Cook lay beside us on the floor. Instead of dismissing me this time, 'Katie' told me to sit down by the medium, and having brought me a candle and matches, said I was to strike a light as soon as she gave three knocks, as Florrie would be hysterical on awaking and need my assistance. She then knelt down and kissed me, and I saw she was still naked. 'Where is your dress, Katie?' I asked. 'Oh, that's gone,' she said: 'I've sent it on before me.' As she spoke thus, kneeling beside me, she rapped three times on the floor. I struck the match almost simultaneously with the signal, but as it flared up 'Katie King' was gone like a flash of lightning, and Miss Cook, as she had predicted, awoke with a burst of frightened tears, and had to be soothed into tranquility again. On another occasion 'Katie King' was asked at the beginning of the séance

by one of the company to say why she could not appear in the light of more than one gas burner. The question seemed to irritate her, and she replied, 'I have told you all, several times before, that I can't stay under a searching light. I don't know why, but I can't, and if you want to prove the truth of what I say, turn up all the gas and see what will happen to me. Only remember, if you do there will be no séance to-night, because I shan't be able to come back again, and you must take your choice.'

"Upon this assertion it was put to the vote if the trial should be made or not, and all present (Mr. S. C. Hall was one of the party) decided we would prefer to witness the effect of a full glare of gas upon the materialised form than to have the usual sitting, as it would settle the vexed question of the necessity of gloom (if not darkness) for a materialising séance for ever. We accordingly told 'Katie' of our choice, and she consented to stand the test, though she said afterwards we had put her to much pain. She took up her station against the drawing-room wall, with her arms extended as if she were crucified. Then three gas-burners were turned on to their full extent, in a room about sixteen feet square. The effect upon 'Katie King' was marvellous. She looked like herself for the space of a second only, then she began gradually to melt away. I can compare the dematerialisation of her form to nothing but a wax doll melting before a hot fire. First the features became blurred and indistinct; they seemed to run into each other. The eyes sunk in the sockets, the nose disappeared, the frontal bone fell in. Next the limbs appeared to give way under her, and she sank lower and lower on the carpet like a crumbling edifice. At last there 'was nothing but her head left above the ground; then a heap of white drapery only, which disappeared with a whisk, as if a hand had pulled it after her, and we were left staring by the light of three gas-burners, at the spot on which 'Katie King' had stood(1).

(1) Some discredit was cast upon this account, and even so high an authority as Sir Oliver Lodge was misled by the assertion of Sir William that he did not witness it. An examination of Miss Marryat's evidence will show that she never claimed that he did. "She was always attired in white drapery, but it varied in quality. Sometimes it looked like long cloth; at others like mull muslin or jaconet; oftenest it was a species of thick cotton net. The

sitters were much given to asking 'Katie' for a piece of her dress to keep, as a souvenir of their visit, and when they received it would seal it up carefully in an envelope and convey it home, and were much surprised, on examining their treasure, to find it had totally disappeared.

"'Katie' used to say that nothing material about her could be made to last without taking away some of the medium's vitality and weakening her in consequence. One evening, when she was cutting off pieces of her dress rather lavishly, I remarked that it would require a great deal of mending. She answered, 'I'll show you how we mend dresses in the Spirit World.' She then doubled up the front breadth of her garment a dozen times and cut two or three round holes in it. I am sure, when she let it fall again, there must have been thirty or forty holes, and 'Katie' said, 'Isn't that a nice cullender?'

"She then commenced, whilst we stood close to her, to shake her skirt gently about, and in a minute it was as perfect as before, without a hole to be seen. When we expressed our astonishment, she told me to take the scissors and cut off her hair. She had a profusion of ringlets falling to her waist that night. I obeyed religiously, hacking the hair wherever I could, whilst she kept on saying, 'Cut more! cut more! not for yourself, you know, because you can't take it away!'

"So I cut off curl after curl, and as fast as they fell to the ground the hair grew again upon her head. When I had finished, 'Katie' asked me to examine her hair to see if I could detect any place where I had used the scissors, and I did so without any effect. Neither was the severed hair to be found. It had vanished out of sight. 'Katie' was photographed many times by limelight by Mr. Alfred Crookes, but her portraits are all too much like her medium to be of any value in establishing her claim to a separate identity. She had always stated she should not appear on this earth after the month of May, 1874, and accordingly, on the 21st she assembled her friends to say 'Good-bye' to them, and I was one of the number. 'Katie' had asked Miss Cook to provide her with a large basket of flowers and ribbons, and she sat on the floor and made up a bouquet for each of her friends to keep in remembrance of her.

"Mine, which consists of lilies of the valley and pink geranium,

looks almost as fresh to-day, nearly seventeen years after, as it did when she gave it to me. It was accompanied by the following words, which 'Katie' wrote on a sheet of paper in my presence:

'From Annie Owen de Morgan (alias "Katie") to her friend, Florence Marryat Ross-Church. With love. Pensez a moi.- May 21st, 1874.'

"The farewell scene was as pathetic as if we had been parting with a dear companion by death. 'Katie' herself did not seem to know how to go. She returned again and again to have a last look, especially at Mr. Crookes, who was as attached to her as she was to him. Her prediction has been fulfilled, and from that day Florence Cook never saw her again nor heard anything about her. Her place was shortly filled by another influence, who called herself 'Marie.' and who danced and sung in a truly professional style, and certainly as Miss Cook never either danced or sung. I should not have mentioned the appearance of this spirit, whom I only saw once or twice, excepting for the following reason. On one occasion Miss Cook (then Mrs. Corner) was giving a public seance at the rooms of the National British Association of Spiritualists, at which a certain Sir George Sitwell, a very young man, was present, and at which he declared that the medium cheated, and that the spirit 'Marie' was herself, dressed up to deceive the audience. Letters appeared in the newspapers about it, and the whole press came down upon Spiritualists, and declared them all to be either knaves or fools. These notices were published on the morning of a day on which Miss Cook was engaged to give another public séance, at which I was present. She was naturally very much cut up about them. Her reputation was at stake; her honour had been called into question, and being a proud girl, she resented it bitterly. Her present audience was chiefly composed of friends, but, before commencing, she put it to us whether, whilst under such a stigma, she had better not sit at all. We, who had all tested her and believed in her, were unanimous in repudiating the vile charges brought against her, and in begging the séance should proceed. Florrie refused, however, to sit unless someone remained in the cabinet with her, and she chose me for the purpose. I was, therefore, tied to her securely with a stout rope, and

we remained thus fastened together for the whole of the evening. Under which conditions 'Marie' appeared, and sung and danced outside the cabinet, just as she had done to Sir George Sitwell, whilst her medium remained tied to me. So much for men who decide a matter before they have sifted it to the bottom. Mrs. Elgie Corner has long since given up mediumship, either private or public, and lives deep down in the heart of Wales, where the babble and scandal of the city affect her no longer. But she told me, only last year, that she would not pass through the suffering she had endured on account of Spiritualism again for all the good this, world could give her."

One point which will strike the critic in this account is the remark that sometimes the spirit form would exactly resemble the medium, while at other times it would be totally different. Every experienced investigator has had the same result. Working with Miss Bessinet, I have frequently seen faces which were identical with her own, and afterwards those which could not possibly have been hers - two appearing sometimes at the same moment. The natural explanation would be that it actually is the medium's face, and if she be in a trance state it is possible that such an explanation would be innocent as well as true, the forces which controlled her using her as best they could when the conditions did not admit of materialisation. Sometimes the medium's own form may be used with ectoplasmic additions. Thus the great German authority, Dr. Schrenck-Notzing, says, in talking of one of the photographs of "Eva," taken with ectoplasmic drapery around her(2):

"The photograph is interesting as throwing a light on the genesis of the so-called 'transfiguration,' i.e., the medium takes upon herself the part of the spirit, endeavouring to dramatise the character of the person in question by clothing herself in the materialized fabrics. This transition stage is found in nearly all materializing mediums. The literature of the subject records a large number of attempts at the exposure of mediums thus impersonating 'spirits,' e.g., that of the medium Bastian by the Crown Prince Rudolph, that of Crookes' medium, Miss Cook; that of Mrs. d'Esperance, etc. In all these cases the medium was seized, but the fabrics used for masking immediately disappeared and were not afterwards found."

(2) "The Phenomena of Materialisation" (English translation), page 97.

The case of the alleged exposure of Mrs. Corner seemed to have been exactly as Dr. Schrenck-Notzing describes, and such incidents bringing undeserved reproach upon the medium will always occur if the sitters do not take the precaution of securely fastening him or her. Experienced mediums are aware of this, and take precautions accordingly. The writer can well remember having a sitting with the famous medium, Evan Powell, in the privacy of his own bedroom. Powell insisted upon being tied up, and on the writer remarking that such a precaution was unnecessary, since long experiment had quite convinced him of his honesty, he answered: "I must insist upon it as a protection for myself. How can I answer for what I may do when I am unconscious in a trance? I might unconsciously wander round the room, and you, finding me doing so, would lose confidence in me for ever." This saying throws a strong light upon such cases as the alleged exposure of Mrs. Corner by Major Sitwell and others. In that case all present testified to the appearance of white garments, while the medium, when seized, had nothing of the sort.

About Florence Cook, Katie King and William Crookes on wikipedia. Crookes' research conditions

[Florence Cook](#)



[Katie King](#)

[William Crookes](#)

*"It must be at my own house, and my own selection of friends and spectators, under my own conditions, and I may do whatever I like as regards apparatus"* (William Crookes about his research conditions) (from Arthur Conan Doyle's book "The history of Spiritualism" 1926: volume 1, 177).

## Skeptical article about Florence Cook och Katie King

[The Strange Story of Florence Cook and Katie King](#), by "Ian".

## Testimony about Katie King by Arthur Conan Doyle

Arthur Conan Doyle writes at page 240-251 in his "[The history of Spiritualism. Vol. 1](#)" (1926) the following about Katie King:

"Miss Florence Cook, with whom Crookes undertook his classical series of experiments, was a young girl of fifteen who was asserted to possess strong psychic powers, taking the rare shape of complete materialization. It would appear to have been a family characteristic, for her sister, Miss Kate Cook, was not less famous. There had been some squabble with an alleged exposure in which a Mr. Volckman had taken sides against Miss Cook, and in her desire for vindication she placed herself entirely under the protection of Mrs. Crookes, declaring that her husband might make any experiments upon her powers under his own conditions, and asking for no reward save that he should clear her character as a medium by giving his exact conclusions to the world. Fortunately, she was dealing with a man of unswerving intellectual honesty. We have had experience in these latter days of mediums giving themselves up in the same unserved way to scientific investigation and being betrayed by the investigators, who had not the moral courage to admit those results which would have entailed their own public acceptance of the spiritual interpretation.

Professor Crookes published a full account of his methods in the Quarterly Journal of Science<sup>^</sup> of which he was then editor. In his house at Mornington Road a small study opened into the chemical laboratory, a door with a curtain separating the two rooms. Miss Cook lay entranced upon a couch in the inner room. In the outer in subdued light sat Crookes, with such other observers as he invited. At the end of a period which varied from twenty minutes to an hour the materialized figure was built up from the ectoplasm of the medium. The existence of this substance and

its method of production were unknown at that date, but subsequent research has thrown much light upon it, an account of which has been embodied in the chapter on ectoplasm. The actual effect was that the curtain was opened, and there emerged into the laboratory a female who was usually as different from the medium as two people could be. This apparition, which could move, talk, and act in all ways as an independent entity, is known by the name which she herself claimed as her own, "Katie King."

The natural explanation of the sceptic is that the two women were really the same woman, and that Katie was a clever impersonation of Florence. The objector could strengthen his case by the observation made not only by Crookes but by Miss Marryat and others, that there were times when Katie was very like Florence.

Herein lies one of the mysteries of materialization which call for careful consideration rather than sneers. The author, sitting with Miss Besinnet, the famous American medium, has remarked the same thing, the psychic faces beginning when the power was weak by resembling those of the medium, and later becoming utterly unlike. Some speculators have imagined that the etheric form of the medium, her spiritual body, has been liberated by the trance, and is the basis upon which the other manifesting entities build up their own simulacra. However that may be, the fact has to be admitted ; and it is paralleled by Direct Voice phenomena, where the voice often resembles that of the medium at first and then takes an entirely different tone, or divides into two voices speaking at the same time.

However, the student has certainly the right to claim that Florence Cook and Katie King were the same individual until convincing evidence is laid before

him that this is impossible. Such evidence Professor Crookes is very careful to give.

The points of difference which he observed between Miss Cook and Katie are thus described :

Katie's height varies ; in my house I have seen her six inches taller than Miss Cook. Last night, with bare feet and not tip-toeing, she was four and a half inches taller than Miss Cook, Katie's neck was bare last night ; the skin was perfectly smooth both to touch and sight, whilst on Miss Cook's neck is a large blister, which under similar circumstances is distinctly visible and rough to the touch. Katie's ears are unpierced, whilst Miss Cook habitually wears ear-rings. Katie's complexion is very fair, while that of Miss Cook is very dark. Katie's fingers are much longer than Miss Cook's, and her face is also larger. In manners and ways of expression there are also many decided differences.

In a later contribution, he adds ;

Having seen so much of Katie lately, when she has been illuminated by the electric light, I am enabled to add to the points of difference between her and her medium which I mentioned in a former article, i have the most absolute certainty that Miss Cook and Katie are two separate individuals so far as their bodies are concerned. Several little marks on Miss Cook's face are absent on Katie's. Miss Cook's hair is so dark a brown as almost to appear black ; a lock of Katie's, which is now before me, and which she allowed me to cut from her luxuriant tresses, having first traced it up to the scalp and satisfied myself that it actually grew there, is a rich golden auburn.

On one evening I timed Katie's pulse. It beat steadily at 75, whilst Miss Cook's pulse a little time after was going at its usual rate of 90. On applying my ear to Katie's chest, I could hear a heart beating rhythmically inside, and

pulsating even more steadily than did Miss Cook's heart when she allowed me to try a similar experiment after the stance. Tested in the same way, Katie's lungs were found to be sounder than her medium's, for at the time I tried my experiment Miss Cook was under medical treatment for a severe cough.

Crookes took forty-four photographs of Katie King by the aid of electric light. Writing in the *Spiritualist* (1874, p. 270), he describes the methods he adopted :

During the week before Katie took her departure she gave seances at my house almost nightly to enable me to photograph her by artificial light. Five complete sets of photographic apparatus were accordingly fitted up for the purpose, consisting of five cameras, one of the whole-plate size, one half-plate, one quarter-plate, and two binocular stereoscopic cameras, which were all brought to bear upon Katie at the same time on each occasion on which she stood for her portrait. Five sensitizing and fixing baths were used, and plenty of plates were cleaned ready for use in advance, so that there might be no hitch or delay during the photographing operations, which were performed by myself, aided by one assistant.

My library was used as a dark cabinet. It has folding doors opening into the laboratory ; one of these doors was taken off its hinges, and a curtain suspended in its place to enable Katie to pass in and out easily. Those of our friends who were present were seated in the laboratory facing the curtain, and the cameras were placed a little behind them, ready to photograph Katie when she came outside, and to photograph anything also inside the cabinet, whenever the curtain was withdrawn for the purpose. Each evening there were three or four exposures of plates in the five cameras, giving at least fifteen separate pictures at each stance ; some of these were spoilt in the developing, and some in regulating the amount of light. Altogether

I have forty-four negatives, some inferior, some indifferent, and some excellent.

Some of these photographs are in the author's possession, and surely there is no more wonderful impression upon any plate than that which shows Crookes at the height of his manhood, with this angel — for such in truth she was — leaning upon his arm. -The word “ angel ” may seem an exaggeration, but when an other-world spirit submits herself to the discomforts of temporary and artificial existence in order to convey the lesson of survival to a material and worldly generation, there is no more fitting term.

Some controversy has arisen as to whether Crookes ever saw the medium and Katie at the same moment. Crookes says in the course of his report that he frequently followed Katie into the cabinet, “ and have sometimes seen her and her medium together, but most generally I have found nobody but the entranced medium lying on the floor, Katie and her white robes having instantaneously disappeared.”

Much more direct testimony, however, is given by Crookes in a letter to the *Banner of Eight* (U.S.A.), which is reproduced in *The Spiritualist* (London) of July 17, 1874, p. 29. He writes :

In reply to your request, I beg to state that I saw Miss Cook and Katie together at the same moment, by the light of a phosphorus lamp, which was quite sufficient to enable me to see distinctly all I described. The human eye will naturally take in a wide angle, and thus the two figures were included in my field of vision at the same time, but the light being dim, and the two faces being several feet apart, I naturally turned the lamp and my eyes alternately from one to the other, when I desired to bring either Miss Cook's or Katie's face to that portion of my field of view where vision is most distinct. Since the occurrence here

referred to took place, Katie and Miss Cook have been seen together by myself and eight other persons, in my own house, illuminated by the full blaze of the electric light. On this occasion Miss Cook's face was not visible, as her head had to be closely bound up in a thick shawl, but I specially satisfied myself that she was there. An attempt to throw the light direct on to her uncovered face, when entranced, was attended with serious consequences.

The camera, too, emphasizes the points of difference between the medium and the form. He says :

One of the most interesting of the pictures is one in which I am standing by the side of Katie ; she has her bare foot upon a particular part of the floor. Afterwards I dressed Miss Cook like Katie, placed her and myself in exactly the same position, and we were photographed by the same cameras, placed exactly as in the other experiment, and illuminated by the same light. When these two pictures are placed over each other, the two photographs of myself coincide exactly as regards stature, etc., but Katie is half a head taller than Miss Cook, and looks a big woman in comparison with her. In the breadth of her face, in many of the pictures, she differs essentially in size from her medium, and the photographs show several other points of difference.

Crookes pays a high tribute to the medium,  
Florence Cook :

The almost daily stances with which Miss Cook has lately favoured me have proved a severe tax upon her strength, and I wish to make the most public acknowledgment of the obligations I am under to her for her readiness to assist me in my experiments. Every test that I have proposed she has at once agreed to submit to with the utmost willingness ; she is open and straightforward in speech, and I have never seen anything approaching the slightest symptom of a wish to deceive. Indeed, I do not believe 'she could carry on a deception if she were to try, and if she did she



would certainly be found out very quickly, for such a line of action is altogether foreign to her nature. And to imagine that an innocent schoolgirl of fifteen should be able to conceive and then successfully carry out for three years so gigantic an imposture as this, and in that time should submit to any test which might be imposed upon her, should bear the strictest scrutiny, should be willing to be searched at any time, either before or after a stance, and should meet with even better success in my own house than at that of her parents, knowing that she visited me with the express object of submitting to strict scientific tests — ^to imagine, ! say, the Katie King of the last three years to be the result of imposture, does more violence to one's reason and common sense than to believe her to be what she herself affirms.\*

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\* " Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism."

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Granting that a temporary form was built up from the ectoplasm of Florence Cook, and that this form was then occupied and used by an independent being who called herself " Katie King," we are still faced with the question, " Who was Katie King ? " To this we can only give the answer which she gave herself, while admitting that we have no proof of it. She declared that she was the daughter of John King, who had long been known among Spiritualists as the presiding spirit at stances held for material phenomena. His personality is discussed later in the chapter upon the Eddy brothers and Mrs. Holmes, to which the reader is referred. Her earth name had been Morgan, and King was rather the general title of a certain class of spirits than an ordinary name. Her life had been spent two hundred years before, in the reign of Charles the Second, in the island of Jamaica. Whether this be true or not, she undoubtedly conformed to the part, and her general conversation was consistent with her

account. One of the daughters of Professor Crookes wrote to the author and described her vivid recollection of tales of the Spanish Main told by this kindly spirit to the children of the family. She made herself beloved by all. Mrs. Crookes wrote :

At a stance with Miss Cook in our own house when one of our sons was an infant of three weeks old, Katie King, a materialized spirit, expressed the liveliest interest in him and asked to be allowed to see the baby. The infant was accordingly brought into the sdance room and placed in the arms of Katie, who, after holding him in the most natural way for a short time, smilingly gave him back again.

Professor Crookes has left it on record that her beauty and charm were unique in his experience.

The reader may reasonably think that the subdued light which has been alluded to goes far to vitiate the results by preventing exact observation. Professor Crookes has assured us, however, that as the series of stances proceeded toleration was established, and the figure was able to bear a far greater degree of light. This toleration had its limits, however, which were never passed by Professor Crookes, but which were tested to the full in a daring experiment described by Miss Florence Marryat (Mrs. Ross-Church). It should be stated that Professor Crookes was not present at this experience, nor did Miss Marryat ever claim that he was. She mentions, however, the name of Mr. Carter Hall as being one of the company present. Katie had very good-humouredly consented to testing what the effect would be if a full light were turned upon her image :

She took up her station against the drawing-room wall, with her arms extended as if she were crucified. Then three gas-burners were turned on to their full extent in a

room about sixteen feet square. The effect upon Katie King was marvellous. She looked like herself for the space of a second only, then she began gradually to melt away. I can compare the dematerialization of her form to nothing but a wax doll melting before a hot fire. First the features became blurred and indistinct ; they seemed to run into each other. The eyes sunk in the sockets, the nose disappeared, the frontal bone fell in. Next the limbs appeared to give way under her, and she sank lower and lower on the carpet, like a crumbling edifice. At last there was nothing but her head left above the ground — ^then a heap of white drapery only, which disappeared with a whisk, as if a hand had pulled it after her — and we were left staring by the light of three gas-burners at the spot on which Katie King had stood.\*

Miss Marryat adds the interesting detail that at some of these stances Miss Cook's hair was nailed to the ground, which did not in the least interfere with the subsequent emergence of Katie from the cabinet.

The results obtained in his own home were honestly and fearlessly reported by Professor Crookes in his Journal \* and caused the greatest possible commotion in the scientific world. A few of the larger spirits, men like Russel Wallace, Lord Rayleigh, the young and rising physicist William Barrett, Cromwell Varley, and others, had their former views confirmed, or were encouraged to advance upon a new path of knowledge. There was a fiercely intolerant party, however, headed by Carpenter the physiologist, who derided the matter and were ready to impute anything from lunacy to fraud to their illustrious colleague. Organized science came badly out of the matter. In his published account Crookes gave the letters in which he asked Stokes, the secretary of the Royal Society, to come down and see these things with his own eyes. By his refusal to do so, Stokes placed himself in exactly the same position

as those cardinals who would not look at the moons of Jupiter through Galileo's telescope. Material science, when faced with a new problem, showed itself to be just as bigoted as mediaeval theology.

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• "There Is No Death," p. 143, ,

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Before quitting the subject of Katie King one should say a few words as to the future of the great medium from whom she had her physical being. Miss Cook became Mrs. Corner, but continued to exhibit her remarkable powers. The author is only aware of one occasion upon which the honesty of her mediumship was called in question, and that was when she was seized by Sir George Sitwell and accused of personating a spirit. The author is of opinion that a materializing medium should always be secured so that she cannot wander around — and this as a protection against herself. It is unlikely that she will move in deep trance, but in the half-trance condition there is nothing to prevent her unconsciously, or semi-consciously, or in obedience to suggestion from the expectations of the circle, wandering out of the cabinet into the room. It is a reflection of our own ignorance that a lifetime of proof should be clouded by a single episode of this nature. It is worthy of remark, however, that upon this occasion the observers agreed that the figure was white, whereas when Mrs. Corner was seized no white was to be seen. An experienced investigator would probably have concluded that this was not a materialization, but a transfiguration, which means that the ectoplasm, being insufficient to build up a complete figure, has been used to drape the medium so that she herself may carry the simulacrum. Commenting upon such cases, the great German investigator. Dr. Schrenck Notzing, says ; \*

This (a photograph) is interesting as throwing a light on

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\* " Phenomena of MatenaUzation \*\* (English Translation).

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the genesis of the so-called transfiguration, i.e. . . . the medium takes upon herself the part of the spirit, endeavouring to dramatize the character of the person in question by clothing herself in the materialized fabrics. This transition stage is found in nearly all materialization mediums. The literature of the subject records a large number of attempts at exposure of mediums thus impersonating " spirits," e.g. that of the medium Bastian by the Crown Prince Rudolph, that of Crookes's medium. Miss Cook, that of Madame d'Esperance, etc. In all these cases the medium was seized, but the fabrics used for masking immediately disappeared, and were not afterwards found.

It would appear, then, that the true reproach in such cases lies with the negligent sitters rather than with the unconscious medium.

The sensational nature of Professor Crookes's experiments with Miss Cook, and the fact, no doubt, that they seemed more vulnerable to attack, have tended to obscure his very positive results with Home and with Miss Fox, which have established the powers of those mediums upon a solid basis. Crookes soon found the usual difficulties which researchers encounter, but he had sense enough to realize that in an entirely new subject one has to adapt oneself to the conditions, and not abandon the study in disgust because the conditions refuse to adapt themselves to our own preconceived ideas.

Testimony about Katie King by the author to  
William Crookes' biografi

Testimony about Katie King on p. 231-139 in Edmund E. Fournier D'Albe's book "[The life of Sir William Crookes](#)" (1923):

"The year 1873 did not see the end of Crookes's psychical researches. In October 1871 he had been introduced to Miss Florence Cook, of Hackney, who had developed mediumship for "materialisations" earlier in the same year. He had over forty seances with her, many of them in his own house, and became absolutely convinced of the genuineness of her phenomena. According to Florence Cook's own version, her first acquaintance with the physical phenomena of spiritualism was made during some table-tilting experiments with a schoolfellow at Hackney, in which the table rose a clear four feet from the ground. At another sitting she was carried about on her chair by some abnormal means. Continuing the seances at home, she was instructed by raps to proceed to the house of Thomas Blyton, at Dalston, the secretary of a small group of spiritualists, through whom she was introduced to a number of people interested in the phenomena. Acting on their advice, she had regular sittings in her own family, the kitchen being curtained off to form a dark "cabinet" for her, while the family sat outside on the stairs. In these circumstances she was "controlled" by an entity who called herself "Katie King," or "Annie Owen Morgan," and who endeavoured to peep out through the curtain while Florence was lying in a trance inside. The seances went on for some time, gradually developing, until the form of Katie King acquired sufficient "power" to emerge completely from the cabinet.

Several attempts were made by spiritualists to photograph "Katie King," and this was eventually accomplished on May 7, 1873, by the light of burning magnesium powder.

Crookes does not seem to have taken up Miss Cook

seriously until after she had been “exposed by a Mr. Volckmann, who seized “Katie King” and found himself holding the medium dressed up. This happened on December 9, 1873, after Crookes had completed his Quarterly Journal of Science article. At Miss Cook’s earnest request, he devoted five months to an elaborate investigation of her “materialisation.” At some of these sittings, Mr. C. F. Varley, the cable electrician, and an earnest spiritualist, assisted. The latter contributed to The Spiritualist of March 20, 1874, an account of a seance at the house of Mr. J. C. Luxmore, J.P., 16, Gloucester Square, W., which was attended by Mr. Luxmore, Mr. and Mrs. Crookes, Mrs. Cook, Mr. Tapp, Mr. W. H. Harrison, and himself. The medium was inserted in an electric circuit, in which was also a galvanometer which could be watched outside the cabinet, so as to make sure that during the “materialisation” the medium did not leave the cabinet. The electrical arrangements were such that the medium could not have broken the circuit without the fact being indicated by the galvanometer moving over 200 divisions down the scale. The only other possibilities to be guarded against were (1) that the medium should simply join the two sovereigns serving as electrodes on freeing herself. This would have produced an upward deflection of eighty divisions, whereas the greatest fluctuation observed was thirty-six divisions downward ; (2) that the medium should substitute another semi-conductor for

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1 A full account of this episode is given in my book New Light on Immortality .—

E. E. F.

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her own body and free herself without detection. The galvanometer readings were taken every minute by Mr. Varley and recorded and timed by Mr. Harrison.

Beginning at 7.10 p.m., the galvanometer reading fell gradually and steadily by thirty divisions until 7.25. This



fall was due to the drying of the blotting-paper which made contact with the medium's skin. At 7.25 a fall of thirty-six divisions occurred. At 7.27 "Katie" appeared, lifting the curtain to show herself. At 7.36 "Katie" showed her hand and arm, and the galvanometer fell another seventeen divisions. Half a minute afterwards the galvanometer rose twenty-one divisions. After that the galvanometer fell off quite gradually and steadily until 7.48 while "Katie" came and put her hand on Crookes's head and wrote with a pencil on paper. On testing the circuit with electrodes in contact at 7.36, it was found that the electromotive force of the battery (two Daniell cells) had not fallen off as much as 1 per cent.

In discussing this seance, Mr. Varley attaches great importance to the fact that the galvanometer did not vary while "Katie" was moving her arms and writing, which, had Miss Cook emerged to personate the "spirit" must have been the case. It is not stated whether "Katie's" wrists were carefully examined to see if "Katie" was the medium in disguise, with the electrodes still on her wrists. The main object of the experiment, however, seems to have been to eliminate the possibility of the medium freeing herself without detection. This would have been comparatively easy had she known what "resistance" to substitute for that of her own body, as the sovereigns which served as electrodes were only attached to her wrists with elastic rings. The value of the experiment, therefore, hinges altogether on whether Florence Cook had the presence of mind (and sufficient cleverness) to substitute, say, a moist handkerchief, for her own person in the circuit. The observations would in that case be fully accounted for.

Crookes's own account of his experiments with Florence Cook are embodied in three letters published in Mr. W. H. Harrison's journal, *The Spiritualist*, of February, March, and April 1874. He describes a seance on March 12th in which Katie King walked about the room (it was

Crookes's own house) and then retired into the library used as a "cabinet" where the medium was lying. He proceeds :

In a minute she came to the curtain and called me to her, saying :

"Come into the room and lift my medium's head up, she has slipped down." Katie was then standing before me clothed in her usual white robes and turban head-dress. I immediately walked into the library up to Miss Cook, Katie stepping aside to allow me to pass.

I found that Miss Cook had slipped partially off the sofa, and her head was hanging in a very awkward position. I lifted her on to the sofa, and in so doing had satisfactory evidence, in spite of the darkness, that Miss Cook was not attired in the "Katie" costume, but had on her ordinary black velvet dress, and was in a deep trance. Not more than three seconds elapsed between my seeing the white-robed Katie standing before me and my raising Miss Cook on to the sofa from the position into which she had fallen. . . .

I pass on to a seance held last night 1 at Hackney. Katie never appeared to greater perfection, and for nearly two hours she walked about the room, conversing familiarly with those present. On several occasions she took my arm when walking, and the impression conveyed to my mind that it was a living woman by my side, instead of a visitor from the other world, was so strong that the temptation to repeat a recent celebrated experiment became almost irresistible. Feeling, however, that if I had not a spirit, I had at all events a lady close to me, I asked her permission to clasp her in my arms, so as to be able to verify the interesting observations which a bold experimentalist has recently somewhat verbosely recorded. Permission was graciously given, and I accordingly did—well, as any

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1 March 29, 1874.—E. E. F.

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gentleman would do under the circumstances. Mr. Volckmann will be pleased to know that I can corroborate his statement that the

“ghost” (not “struggling,” however) was as material a being as Miss Cook herself. ... I went continuously into the cabinet, it being dark, and felt about for Miss Cook. I found her crouching on the floor. Kneeling down, I let air enter the [phosphorus] lamp, and by its light I saw the young lady dressed in black velvet, as she had been in the early part of the evening, and to all appearance perfectly senseless ; she did not move when I took her hand and held the light quite close to her face, but continued quietly breathing. Raising the lamp, I looked around and saw Katie standing close behind Miss Cook. She was robed in flowing white drapery as we had seen her previously during the seance. Holding one of Miss Cook’s hands in mine, and still kneeling, I passed the lamp up and down, so as to illuminate Katie’s whole figure and satisfy myself thoroughly that I was looking at the veritable Katie whom I had clasped in my arms a few minutes before, and not at the phantasm of a disordered brain. She did not speak, but moved her head and smiled in recognition. Three separate times did I carefully examine Miss Cook crouching before me, to be sure that the hand I held was that of a living woman, and three separate times did I turn the lamp to Katie and examine her with steadfast scrutiny until I had no doubt whatever of her objective reality. At last Miss Cook moved slightly, and Katie instantly motioned me to go away. I went to another part of the cabinet and then ceased to see Katie, but did not leave the room until Miss Cook woke up, and two of the visitors came in with a light.

In criticism of these remarkable observations it has been urged that in the former seance, at Crookes’s own house, the medium was either a dummy or “Katie” herself, who had quickly “dematerialised” in the dark “cabinet” Also that in the latter seance, where there were undoubtedly two persons, one of them was a confederate of the Cook family, in whose house the “materialisation” took place. Crookes, however, speaks with unshakable conviction. He took forty-four negatives of “Katie.” “But photography,” he says, “is inadequate to depict the perfect beauty of Katie’s face as words are powerless to describe her charms of manner.” He indignantly rejects the hypothesis of fraud. “To

imagine,” he says, “ that an innocent schoolgirl of fifteen should be able to conceive and then to carry out for three years so gigantic an imposture as this, and in that time should submit to any test which might be imposed upon her, should bear the strictest scrutiny, should be willing to be searched at any time, either before or after a seance, and should meet with even better success in my own house than at that of her parents, knowing that she visited me with the express object of submitting to strict scientific tests—to imagine, I say, the Katie King of the last three years to be the result of imposture does more violence to one’s reason and common sense than to believe her to be what she herself affirms.”

Florence Cook was, at this time, secretly married to a Mr. Corner. She announced her marriage shortly after the seance above described, at which “ Katie King ” bade farewell to her earthly friends. She gave a number of stances in after years, but not very successfully, and it is alleged that she was eventually “ exposed.” But the fact is that Crookes befriended her until her death in 1902. Indeed, Crookes kept up almost all his spiritualist friendships until they were severed by death. His “ crucial experiments ” were publicly derided as “ Crookesial experiments in sly-kick force.” An American journal published one of the Katie King photographs under the title “ Sir William Crookes arm-in-arm with an Angel,” and the successful “ duping ” of a great English scientist by a girl of fifteen became a cause of merriment to the cynic and of sorrow to Crookes’s well-wishers.

But Crookes never recanted, never wavered, never withdrew. He recognised in time the hopelessness of his attempt to carry the scientific world with him. Science is the knowledge of things which always happen under certain conditions. No “ certain conditions ” can be arranged if they depend upon the whim of an entity which does not even inhabit this world ! You cannot bring it to book, nor make it sign a document, nor sue it for

damages or neglect. Even a scientific fact is not generally accepted until it becomes a habit. Crookes says of this :

The following remarks are so appropriate that I cannot forbear quoting them. They occur in a private letter from an old friend, to whom I had sent an account of some of these occurrences. The high position which he holds in the scientific world renders doubly valuable any opinion he expresses on the mental tendencies of scientific men. "An y intellectual reply to your facts I cannot see. Yet it is a curious fact that even I, with all my tendency and desire to believe spiritualistically, and with all my faith in your power of observing and your thorough truthfulness, feel as if I wanted to see for myself; and it is quite painful to me to think how much more proof I want. Painful, I say, because I see that it is not reason which convinces a man, unless a fact is repeated so frequently that the impression becomes like a habit of mind, an old acquaintance, a thing known so long that it cannot be doubted. This is a curious phase of man's mind, and it is remarkably strong in scientific men—stronger than in others, I think. For this reason we must not always call a man dishonest because he does not yield to evidence for a long time. The old wall of belief must be broken down by much battering."

But it is time we left this chapter of Crookes's life behind. Volumes could—and may yet—be written about it. Nor has the time come to pronounce a final verdict upon it. The jury would inevitably disagree. It may be that future ages will regard Crookes's incursion into spiritualism as a temporary aberration, illustrative of nothing but the fallibility of human judgment. It may be, on the other hand, that history will look upon Crookes's statement of his "supernormal" observations as one of the major steps in human evolution. Half a century has elapsed. A religion counting its adherents by the million has been founded upon Crookes's "researches in spiritualism." That circumstance may, to many, be Crookes's greatest condemnation, since it may be plausibly argued that the majority of religions are built upon fallacies. But the fact remains that the "physical phenomena" of spiritualism are ultimately based upon Crookes. Later

eminent workers in the same field sought to reproduce his phenomena and to corroborate them. There have been slight variations, but nothing essentially new. “ For authentic materialisations,” a writer recently remarked in *Light* , “ we have to go back to ‘ Katie King.’ ” Crookes covered the whole ground. He marked out the boundaries of the physical basis of spiritualism, and no subsequent investigator has been able to extend them. Indeed, no subsequent investigator has been able quite to cover the same ground. Twenty-five years later, when President of the British Association, Crookes said : “ I have nothing to retract. I adhere to my already published statements. I only regret a certain crudity in those early expositions which, no doubt justly, militated against their acceptance by the scientific world.” That world has since become more tolerant and more elastic. Its outlook is wider, its inquiry more profound. It admits much in psychology and psycho-physiology that used to be doubtful and obscure, but it does not admit spiritualism : it does not even admit its “ physical phenomena.” Spiritualism as a religion may legitimately be studied in a section of anthropology, but spiritualism as a science does not exist. To be a spiritualist, the scientist must surrender his wishes, his methods, his views into the hands of his “ spirit friends ” on the “ other side.” If he does that he may achieve a certain peace of mind, but his scientific work will be at an end. His surrender may soothe him on his death-bed, but so may almost any religion when embraced with a fervent faith. And we may expect that the world's work will best be done by those who follow the light of reason to the utmost visible horizon, content in the belief that the divine spark within us is but the promise of a greater glory as yet unrevealed.

## Testimony about Katie King by the author Florence Marryat

Arthur Conan Doyle writes in his work "[The history of Spiritualism](#)", Vol.1, on p. 247-249 (1926) the following about the author and actress [Florence Marryat's](#) testimony about Katie King:

"The reader may reasonably think that the subdued light which has been alluded to goes far to vitiate the results by preventing exact observation. Professor Crookes has assured us, however, that as the series of stances proceeded toleration was established, and the figure was able to bear a far greater degree of light. This toleration had its limits, however, which were never passed by Professor Crookes, but which were tested to the full in a daring experiment described by Miss Florence Marryat (Mrs. Ross-Church). It should be stated that Professor Crookes was not present at this experience, nor did Miss Marryat ever claim that he was. She mentions, however, the name of Mr. Carter Hall as being one of the company present. Katie had very good-humouredly consented to testing what the effect would be if a full light were turned upon her image :

*She took up her station against the drawing-room wall, with her arms extended as if she were crucified. Then three gas-burners were turned on to their full extent in a room about sixteen feet square. The effect upon Katie King was marvellous. She looked like herself for the space of a second only, then she began gradually to melt away. I can compare the dematerialization of her form to nothing but a wax doll melting before a hot fire. First the features became blurred and indistinct ; they seemed to run into each other. The eyes sunk in the sockets, the nose disappeared, the frontal bone fell in. Next the limbs appeared to give way under her, and she sank lower and lower on the carpet, like a crumbling edifice. At last there was nothing but her head left above the ground — ^then a heap of white drapery only, which disappeared with a whisk, as if a hand had pulled it after her — and we were left staring*

*by the light of three gas-burners at the spot on which  
Katie King had stood.\*"*

- "There Is No Death," p. 143, , (från Florence Marryats bok, min anm.)

Testimony about Katie King from William  
Crookes' book "Research in the phenomena of  
spiritualism", part 2



(p. 104-107 from William Crookes' book "[Research in the phenomena of spiritualism](#)" 1874:)

## SPIRIT-FORMS.

IN a letter which I wrote to this journal early in February last, speaking of the phenomena of spirit-forms which have appeared through Miss Cook's mediumship, I said, " Let those who are inclined to judge Miss Cook harshly Suspend their judgment until I bring forward positive evidence which I think will be sufficient to settle the question. Miss Cook is now devoting herself exclusively to a series of private seances with me and one or two friends. . . . Enough has taken place to thoroughly convince me of the perfect truth and honesty of Miss Cook, and to give me every reason to expect that the promises so freely made to me by Katie will be kept."

In that letter I described an incident which, to my mind, went very far towards convincing me that Katie and Miss Cook were two separate material beings. When Katie was outside the cabinet, standing before me, I heard a moaning noise from Miss Cook in the cabinet. I am happy to say that I have at last obtained the " absolute proof to which I referred in the above-quoted letter.

I will, for the present, pass over most of the tests which Katie has given me on the many occasions when Miss Cook has favoured me with seances at this house, and will only describe one or two which I have recently had. I have for some time past been experimenting with a phosphorus lamp, consisting of a 6-oz. or 8-oz. bottle, containing a little phosphorised oil, and tightly corked. I have had reason to hope that by the light of this lamp some of the mysterious phenomena of the cabinet might be rendered visible, and Katie has also expressed herself hopefully as to the same result. On March 12th, during a seance here, after Katie had been walking amongst us and talking for some time, she retreated behind the curtain which separated my laboratory, where the company was sitting, from my library which did temporary duty as a cabinet. In a minute she came to the curtain and called me to her, saying, " Come into the room and lift my medium's head up, she has slipped down." Katie was then standing before me clothed in her usual white robes and turban head-dress. I immediately

walked into the library up to Miss Cook, Katie stepping aside to allow me to pass. I found Miss Cook had slipped partially off the sofa, and her head was hanging in a very awkward position. I lifted her onto the sofa, and in so doing had satisfactory evidence, in spite of the darkness, that Miss Cook was not attired in the "Katie" costume, but had on her ordinary black velvet dress, and was in a deep trance. Not more than three seconds elapsed between my seeing the white-robed Katie standing before me and my raising Miss Cook on to the sofa from the position into which she had fallen.

On returning to my post of observation by the curtain, Katie again appeared, and said she thought she should be able to show herself and her medium to me at the same time. The gas was then turned out, and she asked for my phosphorus lamp. After exhibiting herself by it for some seconds, she handed it back to me, saying, "Now come in and see my medium." I closely followed her into the library, and by the light of my lamp saw Miss Cook lying on the sofa just as I had left her. I looked round for Katie, but she had disappeared. I called her, but there was no answer.

On resuming my place, Katie soon reappeared, and told me that she had been standing close to Miss Cook all the time. She then asked if she might try an experiment herself, and taking the phosphorus lamp from me she passed behind the curtain, asking me not to look in for the present. In a few minutes she handed the lamp back to me, saying she could not succeed, as she had used up all the power, but would try again another time. My eldest son, a lad of fourteen, who was sitting opposite me, in such a position that he could see behind the curtain, tells me he distinctly saw the phosphorus lamp apparently floating about in space over Miss Cook, illuminating her as she lay motionless on the sofa, but he could not see anyone holding the lamp.

I pass on to a seance held last night at Hackney. Katie never appeared to greater perfection, and for nearly two hours she walked about the room, conversing familiarly with those present. On several occasions she took my arm when walking, and the impression conveyed to my mind that it was a living woman by my side, instead of a visitor from the other world, was so strong that the temptation to repeat a recent celebrated experiment became almost irresistible. Feeling, however, that if I had not a spirit, I had at all events a lady close to me, I asked her permission to clasp her in my arms, so as to be able to verify the interesting observations which a bold experi-

mentalist has recently some- what verbosely recorded. Permission was graciously given, and I accordingly did — well, as any gentleman would do under the circumstances. Mr. Volckman will be pleased to know that I can corroborate his statement that the "ghost" (not "struggling," however,) was as materials being as Miss Cook herself. But the sequel shows how wrong it is for an experimentalist, however accurate his observations may be, to venture to draw an important conclusion from an insufficient amount of evidence.

Katie now said she thought she should be able this time to show herself and Miss Cook together. I was to turn the gas out and then come with my phosphorus lamp into the room now used as a cabinet. This I did, having previously asked a friend who was skilful at shorthand to take down any statement I might make when in the cabinet, knowing the importance attaching to first impressions, and not wishing to leave more to memory than necessary. His notes are now before me. I went cautiously into the room, it being dark, and felt about for Miss Cook. I found her crouching on the floor. Kneeling down, I let air enter the lamp, and by its light I saw the young lady dressed in black velvet, as she had been in the early part of the evening, and to all appearance perfectly senseless ; she did not move when I took her hand and held the light quite close to her face, but continued quietly breathing. Raising the lamp, I looked around and saw Katie standing close behind Miss Cook. She was robed in flowing white drapery as we had seen her previously during the seance. Holding one of Miss Cook's hands in mine, and still kneeling, I passed the lamp up and down so as to illuminate Katie's whole figure and satisfy myself thoroughly that I was really looking at the veritable Katie whom I had clasped in my arms a few minutes before, and not at the phantasm of a disordered brain. She did not speak, but moved her head and smiled in recognition. Three separate times did I carefully examine Miss Cook crouching before me, to be sure that the hand I held was that of a living woman, and three separate times did I turn the lamp to Katie and examine her with steadfast scrutiny until I had no doubt whatever of her objective reality. At last Miss Cook moved slightly, and Katie instantly motioned me to go away. I went to another part of the cabinet and then ceased to see Katie, but did not leave the room till Miss Cook woke up, and two of the visitors came in with a light.

Before concluding this article I wish to give some of the points of difference which I have observed between Miss Cook and Katie. Katie's height

varies ; in my house I have seen her six inches taller than Miss Cook. Last night, with bare feet and not " tip-toeing," she was four and a half inches taller than Miss Cook. Katie's neck was bare last night ; the skin was perfectly smooth both to touch and sight, whilst on Miss Cook's neck is a large blister, which under similar circumstances is distinctly visible and rough to the touch. Katie's ears are unpierced, whilst Miss Cook habitually wears earrings. Katie's complexion is very fair, while that of Miss Cook is very dark. Katie's fingers are much longer than Miss Cook's, and her face is also larger. In manners and ways of expression there are also many decided differences.

Miss Cook's health is not good enough to allow of her giving more of these test seances for the next few weeks, and we have, therefore, strongly advised her to take an entire rest before recommencing the experimental campaign which I have sketched out for her, and the results of which I hope to be able to record at some future day.

20 MORNINGTON ROAD, N.W., March 30///, 1874.

## Testimony about Katie King from William Crookes' book "Researches in the phenomena of spiritualism", part 1

(p. 102-104 in William Crookes' book "[Researches in the phenomena of spiritualism](#)" 1874:)

MISS FLORENCE COOK'S MEDIUMSHIP.

[The following letters appeared in the Spiritualistic journals at the dates which they bear. They form a fit conclusion to this series of papers] : —

SIR, — It has been my endeavour to keep as clear of controversy as possible, in writing or speaking about so inflammatory a topic as the phenomena called Spiritual. Except in very few cases, where the prominent position of my opponent would have caused my silence to be ascribed to other than the real motives, I have made no reply to the attacks and misrepresentations which my connection with this subject has entailed upon me.

The case is otherwise, however, when a few lines from me may perhaps assist in removing an unjust suspicion which is cast upon another. And when this other person is a woman, — young sensitive, and innocent, — it becomes especially a duty for me to give the weight of my testimony in favour of her whom I believe to be unjustly accused.

Among all the arguments brought forward on either side touching the phenomena of Miss Cook's mediumship, I see very few facts stated in such a way as to lead an unprejudiced reader, provided he can trust the judgment and veracity of the narrator, to say, "Here at last is absolute proof." I see plenty of strong assertion, much unintentional exaggeration, endless conjecture and supposition, no little insinuation of fraud, and some amount of vulgar buffoonery; but no one has come forward with a positive assertion, based upon the evidence of his own senses, to the effect that when the form which calls itself "Katie" is visible in the room, the body of Miss Cook is either actually in the cabinet or is not there.

It appears to me that the whole question narrows itself into this small compass. Let either of the above alternatives be proved to be a fact, and all the other collateral questions may be dismissed. But the proof must be absolute, and not based upon inferential reasoning, or assumed upon the supposed integrity of seals, knots, and sewing; for I have reason to know that the power at work in these phenomena, like Love, "laughs at locksmiths."

I was in hopes that some of those friends of Miss Cook, who have attended her seances almost from the commencement, and who appear to have been highly favoured in the tests they have received, would ere this, have borne testimony in her favour. In default, however, of evidence from those who

have followed these phenomena from their beginning nearly three years ago, let me, who have only been admitted as it were, at the eleventh hour, state a circumstance which came under my notice at a seance to which I was invited by the favour of Miss Cook, a few days after the disgraceful occurrence which has given rise to this controversy.

The seance was held at the house of Mr. Luxmore, and the "cabinet" was a back drawing room, separated from the front room in which the company sat by a curtain. The usual formality of searching the room and examining the fastenings having been gone through, Miss Cook entered the cabinet.

After a little time the form Katie appeared at the side of the curtain, but soon retreated, saying her medium was not well, and could not be put into a sufficiently deep sleep to make it safe for her to be left.

I was sitting within a few feet of the curtain close behind which Miss Cook was sitting, and I could frequently hear her moan and sob, as if in pain. This uneasiness continued at intervals nearly the whole duration of the stance, and once, when the form of Katie was standing before me in the room, I distinctly heard a sobbing, moaning sound, idoitical with that which Miss Cook had been making at intervals the whole time of the seance, come from behind the curtain where the young lady was supposed to be sitting.

I admit that the figure was startlingly life-like and real, and, as far as I could see in the somewhat dim light, the features resembled those of Miss Cook; but still the positive evidence of one of my own senses that the moan came from Miss Cook in the cabinet, whilst the figure was outside, is too strong to be upset by a mere inference to the contrary, however well supported.

Your readers, sir, know me, and will, I hope, believe that I will not come hastily to an opinion, or ask them to agree with me on insufficient evidence. It is perhaps expecting too much to think that the little incident I have mentioned will have the same weight with them that it had with me. But this I do beg of them — Let those who are inclined to judge Miss Cook harshly, suspend their judgment until I bring forward positive evidence which I think will be sufficient to settle the question. Miss Cook is now devoting herself exclusively to a series of private seances with me and one or two friends. The seances will probably extend over some months, and I am

promised that every desirable test shall be given to me. These seances have not been going on many weeks, but enough has taken place to thoroughly convince me of the perfect truth and honesty of Miss Cook, and to give me every reason to expect that the promises so freely made to me by Katie will be kept. All I now ask is that your readers will not hastily assume that everything which is prima facie suspicious necessarily implies deception, and that they will suspend their judgment until they hear from me again on this subject. — I am, &c, William Crookes.

20 MORNINGTON ROAD, LONDON, February 3, 1874.

## Testimony about Katie King from William Crookes' book "Researches in the phenomena of spiritualism", part 3

(from p. 109-112 in the book "[Researches in the phenomena of spiritualism](#)" 1874 by William Crookes:)

THE LAST OF KATIE KING.

THE PHOTOGRAPHING OF KATIE KING BY THE AID OF  
THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

HAVING taken a very prominent part of late at Miss Cook's seances, and having" been very successful in taking numerous photographs of Katie King by the aid of the electric light, I have thought that the publication of a few of the details would be of interest to the readers of the Spiritualist.

During the week before Katie took her departure she gave seances at my house almost nightly, to enable me to photograph her by artificial light. Five complete sets of photographic apparatus were accordingly fitted up for the purpose, consisting of five cameras, one of the whole-plate size, one half-plate, one quarter-plate, and two binocular stereoscopic cameras, which were all brought to bear upon Katie at the same time on each occasion on which she stood for her portrait. Five sensitising and fixing baths were used, and plenty of plates were cleaned ready for use in advance, so that there might be no hitch or delay during the photographing operations, which were' performed by myself, aided by one assistant.

My library was used as a dark cabinet. It has folding doors opening into the laboratory ; one of these doors was taken off its hinges, and a curtain suspended in its place to enable Katie to pass in and out easily. Those of our friends who were present were seated in the laboratory facing the curtain, and the cameras were placed a little behind them, ready to photograph Katie when she came outside, and to photograph anything also inside the cabinet, whenever the curtain was withdrawn for the purpose. Each evening there were three or four exposures of plates in the five cameras, giving at least fifteen separate pictures at each seance ; some of these were spoilt in the developing, and some in regulating the amount of light. Altogether I have forty-four negatives, some inferior, some indifferent, and some excellent.

Katie instructed all the sitters but myself to keep their seats and to keep conditions, but for some time past she



has given me permission to do what I liked — to touch her, and to enter and leave the cabinet almost whenever I pleased. I have frequently followed her into the cabinet, and have sometimes seen her and her medium together, but most generally I have found nobody but the entranced medium lying on the floor, Katie and her white robes having instantaneously disappeared.

During the last six months Miss Cook has been a frequent visitor at my house, remaining sometimes a week at a time. She brings nothing with her but a little hand-bag, not locked ; during the day she is constantly in the presence of Mrs. Crookes, myself, or some other member of my family, and, not sleeping by herself, there is absolutely no opportunity for any preparation even of a less elaborate character than would be required for enacting Katie King. I prepare and arrange my library myself as the dark cabinet, and usually, after Miss Cook has been dining and conversing with us, and scarcely out of our sight for a minute, she walks direct into the cabinet, and I, at her request, lock its second door, and keep possession of the key all through the seance; the gas is then turned out, and Miss Cook is left in darkness.

On entering the cabinet Miss Cook lies down upon the floor, with her head on a pillow, and is soon entranced. During the photographic seances, Katie muffled her medium's head up in a shawl to prevent the light falling upon her face. I frequently drew the curtain on one side when Katie was standing near, and it was a common thing for the seven or eight of us in the laboratory to see Miss Cook and Katie at the same time, under the full blaze of the electric light. We did not on these occasions actually see the face of the medium because of the shawl, but we saw her hands and feet ; we saw her move uneasily under the influence of the intense light, and we heard her moan occasionally. I have one photograph of the two together, but Katie is seated in front of Miss Cook's head.

During the time I have taken an active part in these

seances Katie's confidence in me gradually grew, until she refused to give a seance unless I took charge of the arrangements. She said she always wanted me to keep close to her, and near the cabinet, and I found that after this confidence was established, and she was satisfied I would not break any promise I might make to her, the phenomena increased greatly in power, and tests were freely given that would have been unobtainable had I approached the subject in another manner. She often consulted me about persons present at the seances, and where they should be placed, for of late she had become very nervous, in consequence of certain ill-advised suggestions that force should be employed as an adjunct to more scientific modes of research.

One of the most interesting of the pictures is one in which I am standing by the side of Katie ; she has her bare foot upon a particular part of the floor. Afterwards I dressed Miss Cook like Katie, placed her and myself in exactly the same position, and we were photographed by the same cameras, placed exactly as in the other experiment, and illuminated by the same light. When these two pictures are placed over each other, the two photographs of myself coincide exactly as regards stature, &c, but Katie is half a head taller than Miss Cook, and looks a big woman in comparison with her. In the breadth of her face, in many of the pictures, she differs essentially in size from her medium, and the photographs show several other points of difference.

But photography is as inadequate to depict the perfect beauty of Katie's face, as words are powerless to describe her charms of manner. Photography may, indeed, give a map of her countenance ; but how can it reproduce the brilliant purity of her complexion, or the ever-varying expression of her most mobile features, now overshadowed with sadness when relating some of the bitter experiences of her past life, now smiling with all the innocence of happy girlhood when she had collected my children round her, and was amusing them by recounting anecdotes of her

adventures in India?

" Round her she made an atmosphere of life;  
The very air seemed lighter from her eyes,  
They were so soft and beautiful, and rife  
With all we can imagine of the skies;  
Her overpowering presence make you feel  
It would not be be idolatry to kneel."

Having seen so much of Katie lately, when she has been illuminated by the electric light, I am enabled to add to the points of difference between her and her medium which I mentioned in a former article. I have the most absolute certainty that Miss Cook and Katie are two separate individuals so far as their bodies are concerned. Several little marks on Miss Cook's face are absent on Katie's. Miss Cook's hair is so dark a brown as almost to appear black; a lock of Katie's which is now before me, and which she allowed me to cut from her luxuriant tresses, having first traced it up to the scalp and satisfied myself that it actually grew there, is a rich golden auburn.

On one evening I timed Katie's pulse. It beat steadily a t 75> whilst Miss Cook's pulse a little time after, was going at its usual rate of 90. On applying my ear to Katie's chest I could hear a heart beating rythmically inside, and pulsating even more steadily than did Miss Cook's heart when she allowed me to try a similar experiment after the seance.

Tested in the same way Katie's lungs were found to be sounder than her medium's, for at the time I tried my experiment Miss Cook was under medical treatment for a severe cough.

Your readers may be interested in having Mrs. Ross Church's, and your own accounts of the last appearance of Katie, supplemented by my own narrative, as far as I can publish it. When the time came for Katie to take her farewell I asked that she would let me see the last of her.

Accordingly when she had called each of the company up to her and had spoken to them a few words in private, she gave some general directions for the future guidance and protection of Miss Cook. From these, which were taken down in shorthand, I quote the following : " Mr. Crookes has done very well throughout, and I leave Florrie with the greatest confidence in his hands, feeling perfectly sure he will not abuse the trust I place in him. He can act in any emergency better than I can myself, for he has more strength." Having concluded her directions, Katie invited me into the cabinet with her, and allowed me to remain there to the end.

After closing the curtain she conversed with me for some time, and then walked across the room to where Miss Cook was lying senseless on the floor. Stooping over her, Katie touched her, and said, "Wake up, Florrie, wake up! I must leave you now." Miss Cook then woke and tearfully entreated Katie to stay a little time longer. "My dear, I can't; my work is done. God bless you," Katie replied, and then continued speaking to Miss Cook. For several minutes the two were conversing with each other, till at last Miss Cook's tears prevented her speaking. Following Katie's instructions I then came forward to support Miss Cook, who was falling on to the floor, sobbing hysterically. I looked round, but the white-robed Katie had gone. As soon as Miss Cook was sufficiently calmed, a light was procured and I led her out of the cabinet.

The almost daily seances with which Miss Cook has lately favoured me have proved a severe tax upon her strength, and I wish to make the most public acknowledgment of the obligations I am under to her for her readiness to assist me in my experiments. Every test that I have proposed she has at once agreed to submit to with the utmost willingness ; she is open and straightforward in speech, and I have never seen anything approaching the slightest symptom of a wish to deceive. Indeed, I do not believe she could carry on a deception if she were to try, and if she did she

would certainly be found out very quickly, for such a line of action is altogether foreign to her nature. And to imagine that an innocent school-girl of fifteen should be able to conceive and then successfully carry out for three years so gigantic an imposture as this, and in that time should submit to any test which might be imposed upon her, should bear the strictest scrutiny, should be willing to be searched at any time, either before or after a seance, and should meet with even better success in my own house than at that of her parents, knowing that she visited me with the express object of submitting to strict scientific tests, — to imagine, I say, the Katie King of the last three years to be the result of imposture does more violence to one's reason and common sense than to believe her to be what she herself affirms.

It would not be right for me to conclude this article without also thanking Mr. and Mrs. Cook for the great facilities they have given me to carry on these observations and experiments.

My thanks and those of all Spiritualists are also due to Mr. Charles Blackburn for the generous manner in which he has made it possible for Miss Cook to devote her whole time to the development of these manifestations and latterly to their scientific examination.

## Testimony about Katie King in " Choses de l' Autre Monde" by Eugene Nus

"Another witness present relates the following, with additional details about the last seance with Katie King, which is found in the French " Choses de l' Autre Monde, troisieme edition, Paris, par Eugene Nus," translated, 1891, by C. G. Helleberg, of Cincinnati, Ohio :

" Katie talked about her near departure, and accepted a bouquet of flowers which Mr. Tapp had offered to her, and also some lilies from Professor Crookes. Katie requested

Mr. Tapp to take the bandage off the bouquet and place the flowers before her on the floor. She sat herself down on the floor in the Turkish fashion, and asked us to do the same around her. After that she divided the flowers and gave each of the company a small bouquet, around which she had wrapped a blue ribbon. She wrote, also, some letters, and signed them with 'Annie Owen Morgan/' saying that that was her right name during her earth life. She wrote, also, a letter of adieu to her medium, and added a rose button as a remembrance. After that she took a scissors and cut off a bunch of her hair and gave each one part of it. She now took the arm of Mr. Crookes and made a tour round the room, and shook hands with every one of us. Katie sat herself down again and cut several pieces from her robe and her veil, of which she made presents. Seeing so many holes in her dress, as she sat between Mr. Crookes and Mr. Tapp, some one asked her if she could repair her dress now, as she had done on other occasions. She then presented the holes before us in the clear light, made some taps over them, and all the holes disappeared. Those that sat near her examined and touched the stuff with her permission, and they declared and affirmed that there were no more holes where before they had seen several, some of which were many inches in diameter. .

" Katie said she could not speak or show her face to them any more. During the three years she had accomplished these physical manifestations she had passed a painful life, to expiate her faults, but she had resolved to elevate herself to a superior degree in the spiritual life. After long intervals she would be able to correspond and write to her medium, but the medium was always able to see her clairvoyantly.""

(excerpt from the book "[Remarkable spirit manifestations](#)" 1891 by William Crookes and Carl Gustaf Helleberg, p. 16-17. [Here](#) is a wikipedia-article about Eugene Nus in french. He is "poet, philosopher, dramatic author and *journalist*" according to J.M. Peebles)

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